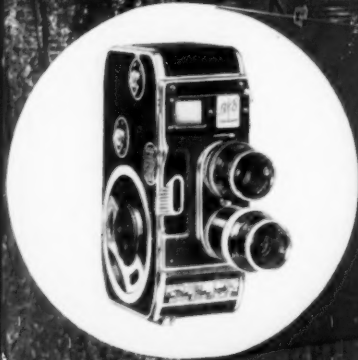
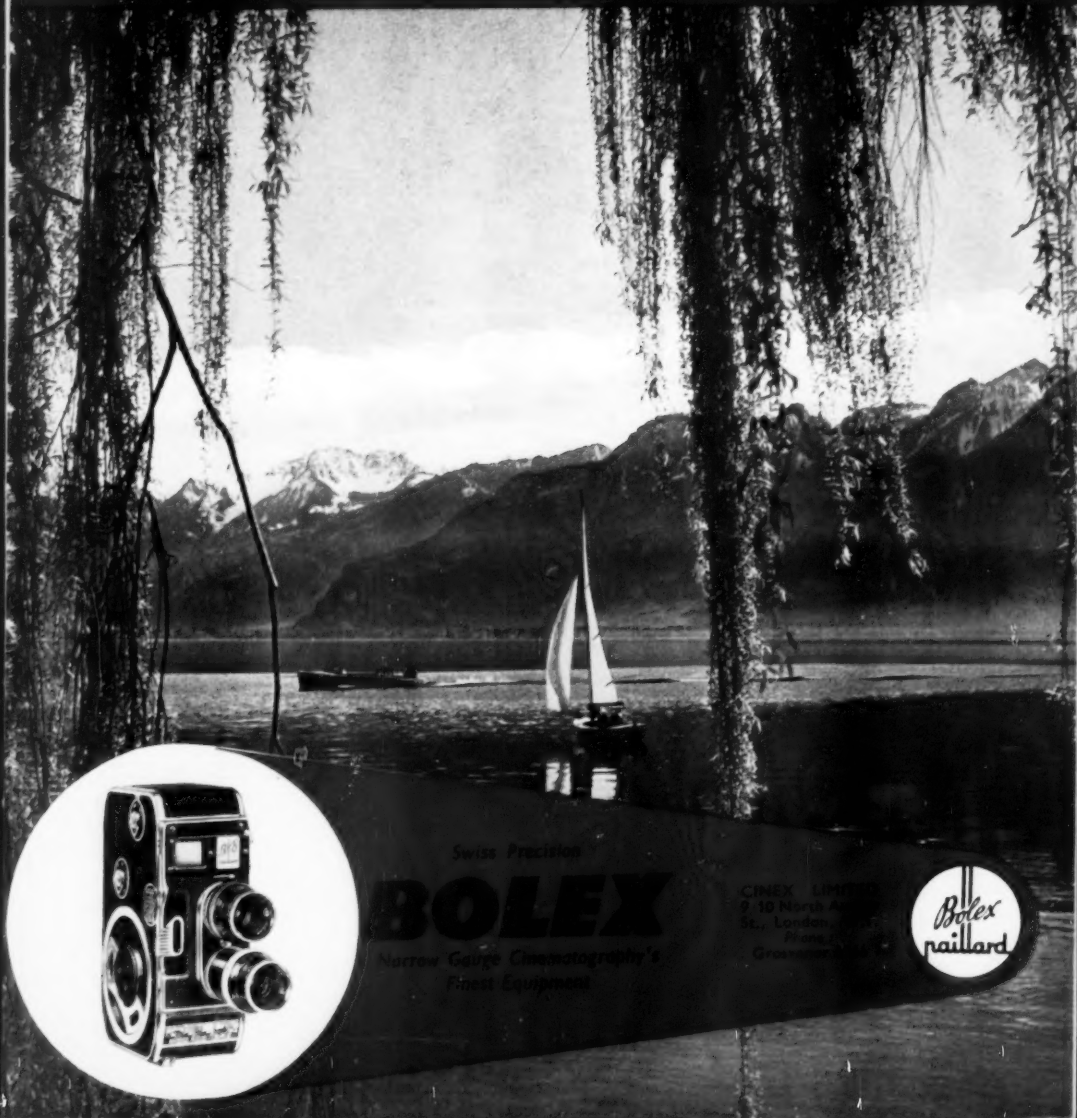


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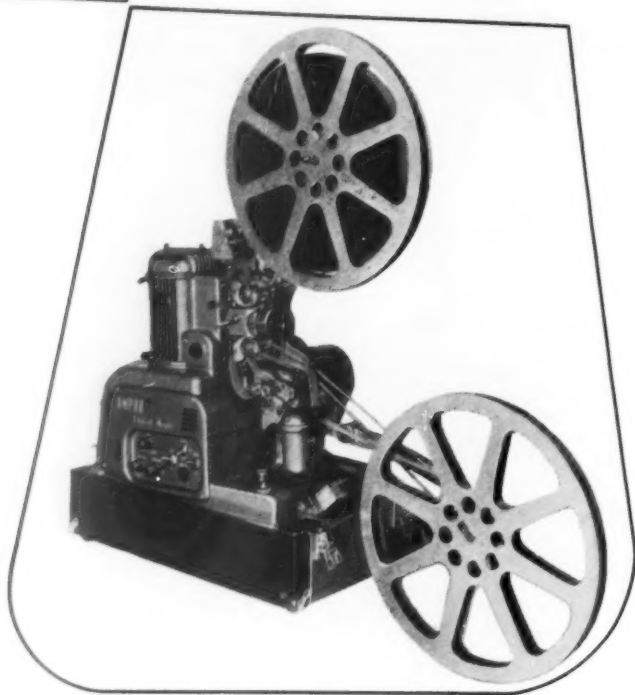
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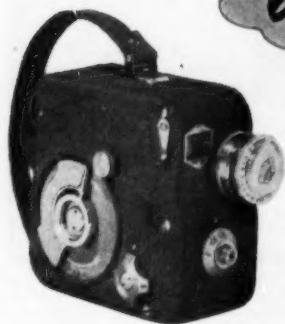
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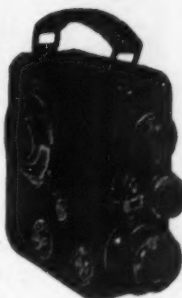
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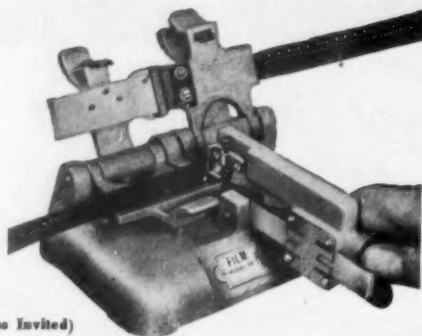
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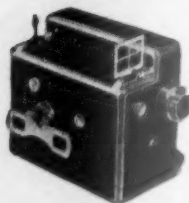
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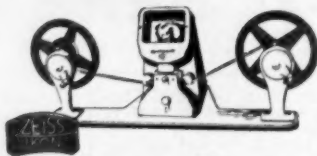
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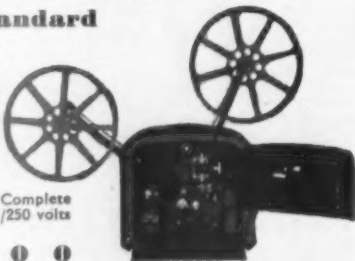
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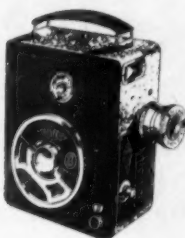
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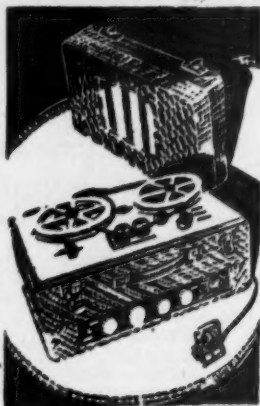
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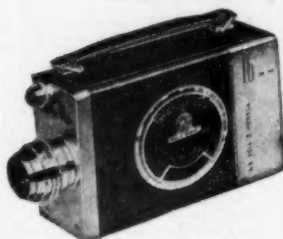
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Last Month in the A.C.W. we referred to 8mm. This Month to 16mm. CINE CAMERAS

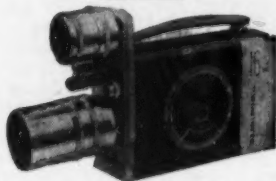
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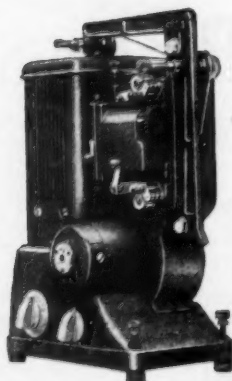
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THE PAILLARD H16

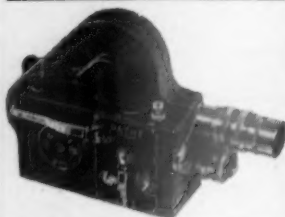
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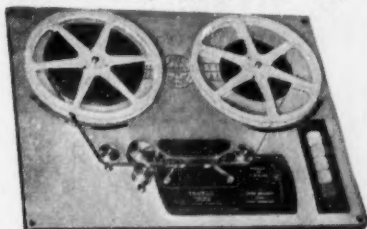
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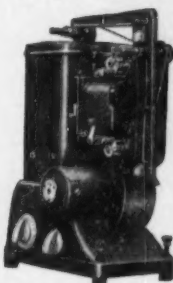
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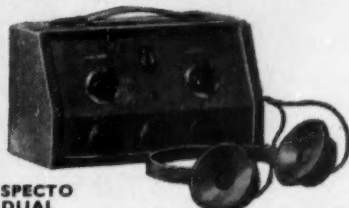
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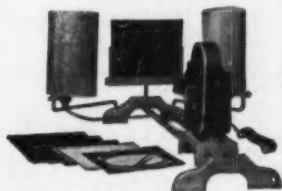
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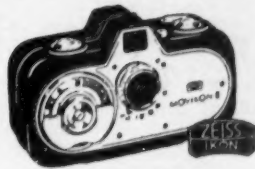
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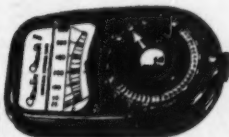
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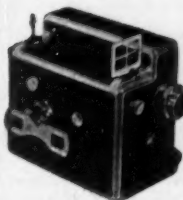
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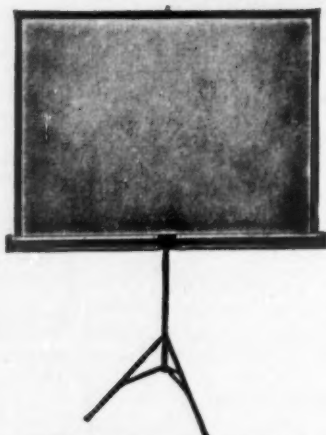
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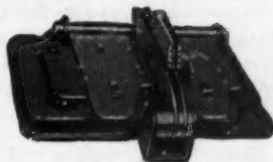


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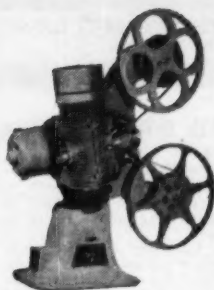
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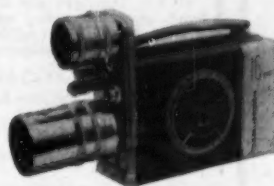


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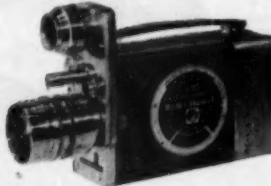
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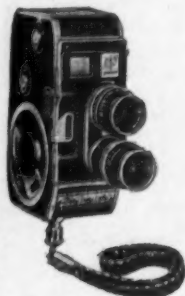
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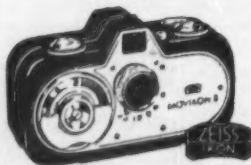
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AMATEUR CINE WORLD

Vol. 18

No. 2

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DEREK HILL

Film Librarian
BRIAN FAIRWEATHER

Published from 46-47 Chancery Lane,
London, W.C.2, on the 20th of the
month preceding the month for which
it is dated. Annual subscription:
17s. 6d. post paid. U.S.A.: \$3.00.

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Other People's Families

WILL YOU TAKE PART IN THIS SCHEME?

Could A.C.W. do something about it? asked a number of readers who sent us cuttings from the *Sunday Pictorial* containing this letter:

"Isn't it possible for films to be made showing the wives and children of Servicemen saying 'Hello' to Dad? Imagine how wonderful it would be for men in entertainment huts miles away from home to be able to see their loved ones looking right at them, in their own sitting room or garden! Families themselves might even contribute to the cost".

An editorial footnote applauds the idea, says that it shouldn't be impossible and continues: "How about it, amateur film makers and Service authorities?" Certainly it's a fine idea, but if it is to be translated into practice, somebody has to set things going. It can't be done piecemeal.

The Hartlepool Cine Club probably speak for many when they write: "We would be prepared to take part in such a scheme if it could be arranged. However, a national lead would be needed to approach Service authorities, and we thought THE magazine was the one to do so. Maybe you could find out if other clubs were willing, and, if they were, you could contact official quarters".

Lone Workers, Too

It seems to us that it is not only the clubs but lone workers as well who might welcome the opportunity of gaining in a good cause experience of filming other people's families. The writer of the original letter expresses the view that the families themselves "might even contribute to the cost". We think they should—they or the Service authorities. It should not be left to the amateur to finance the scheme as well as operate it, though perhaps the fortunately placed amateur might like to offer a few short films as a gift. No amateur would, of course, make a charge for what should be a labour of love, but it is only right that he should be reimbursed for the cost of the stock used.

If, then, you would like to collaborate in such a scheme will you write us as soon as possible, giving the following information:

1. What gauge of film you use (8mm., 9.5mm. or 16mm.). The gauge used by the Services is 16mm., but if a sufficient number of 8mm. and 9.5mm. films were forthcoming, the Services welfare organisations might well consider that the acquisition of 8mm. and 9.5mm. projectors would be called for. But only a really respectable number of films would make this course practical. 8mm. and 9.5mm. are pre-eminently the gauges for family filming

and it would be a great pity if they did not come into the picture; but it is numbers alone that will decide.

2. Whether you own, or have access to, a tape recorder.

3. Whether you can undertake indoor as well as outdoor shooting. (It doesn't matter at all if you prefer to concentrate on exterior work: the garden, the public park or any place that holds happy memories for "actors" and audience would do fine.)

4. Would you take shots only in your own district or would you be prepared to travel and, if so, how far?

5. Please give a brief indication of your film-making experience. The sort of shots required would not be difficult to take, but it would be calamitous if complete inexperience resulted in complete failure.

6. It is assumed that you would require to be reimbursed for the film stock used, but if you want to make a gift of it, or of some of it, please say so.

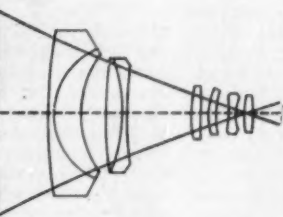
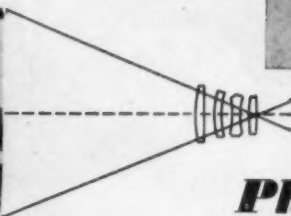
Fine Practice

Making short films of this kind could be most rewarding from all points of view. Fictional frameworks would be out, of course. To see the family tracking crooks or, indeed, engaging in any sort of make-believe, would almost certainly provoke embarrassment and derision. Yet at the same time lame shots of mother and the children smiling self-consciously at the camera and asking Tom how he's getting on and how much they miss him would certainly be no less embarrassing.

There would be the need to reconcile working out a suitable treatment with the necessity of achieving apparent spontaneity; but A.C.W. will be glad to help there, and if the response to the scheme warrants it, we shall be only too pleased to publish articles on the approach to adopt, the sort of non-sync. dialogue which will best get over, and how to combat problems which might arise.

It is significant that the best personal films in the 1953 Ten Best entries were those in which the producers were content to show the family and were not worried about finding an *excuse* for showing them. They did not trouble to invent plots for which the family could be used as players, but just went ahead and presented a slice of family life. In four minutes (which would probably be a good length for the Service films) there would not in any case be time or scope for elaborate treatment. Every shot would have to play its part. And remember, four minute films have featured in the Ten Best!

Cine Novelties and Notions



Wide angle lenses are comparatively rare for 8mm., so that this new supplementary lens by Rodenstock for the 8mm. Nizo—the Ronagon—should be warmly welcomed. Screwed to the front of the normal 12.5mm. lens, it alters the focal length to 6.25mm. and, as shown above, nearly doubles the angle of view.

They streamed in—150,000 of them—on foot, in cars, in coaches, in special trains. They came not only from Germany but from most other countries of Europe, the largest non-German contingents being from Holland, Belgium and France. Photokina was the magnet, the mammoth photographic and cine exhibition at Cologne, which for eight days in April housed 408 stands in seven large halls, the whole occupying half a million feet of floor space. And to report on it all were over 300 foreign press correspondents, with A.C.W. among the British representatives.

The warm atmosphere of international goodwill and genuine interest in the amateur (he is said to represent 50 per cent of all the trade done) prevailed outside as well as in. Some South African visitors, for example, having exposed a number of reels on their trip and impatient to see the results, called at the biggest photo-

A particular interesting accessory for still and cine users without coupled rangefinders is the Focameter. After the rangefinder is attached, the camera lens is set at infinity and focusing thereafter done by operating the Focameter knob which automatically sets the camera focus.

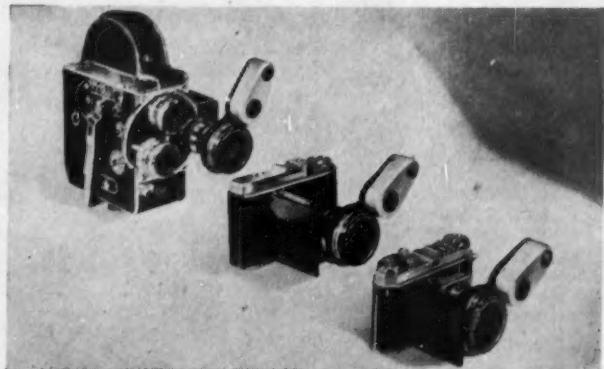


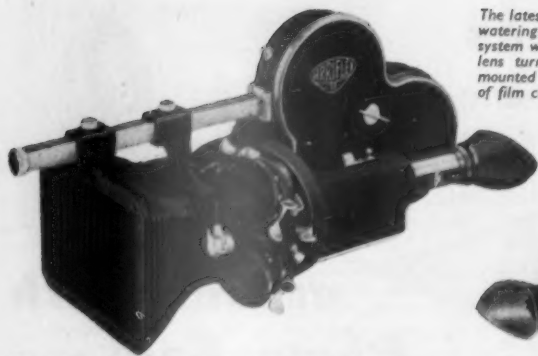
at Mammoth Photo Fair

Trends evidenced at the famous Photokina exhibition at Cologne suggest that designers are intent on making simple equipment even more simple and elaborate apparatus yet more complicated. But surely there is room for a "middle class"? Here are notes on some of the outstanding items, most of which should become available here in due course.

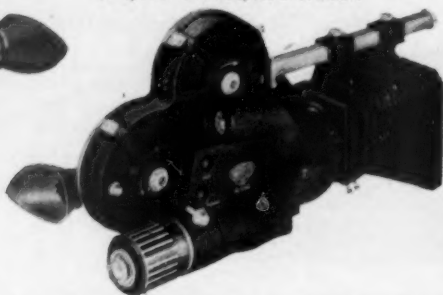
graphic shop in Cologne and asked if it was possible to have the films run through. They were immediately escorted to a comfortably appointed miniature cinema, their six reels of Kodachrome were projected for them and then the assistant gave them a critical appraisal of each in faultless English. He seemed surprised that they should have wanted to make some recompense for the trouble taken.

Walther Bever-Mohr, who represents Germany at the UNICA conferences, and Wolf Wieloch of the Cologne Cine Club entertained us royally and showed us rushes of their film of the opening of Photokina two days before and of the visit of Dr. Heuss, President of the West German Federal Republic, to the Bundes Deutscher Filmamateure stand. The B.D.F.A.





The latest 16mm. version of the Arriflex has a number of mouth-watering features, in particular a through-the-lens focusing system which gives a 10x magnification. The special divergent lens turret enables lenses from 11.5mm. to 300mm. to be mounted at the same time without interference, and over 2,000ft. of film can be run from an 8 volt rechargeable battery through the special variable speed D.C. motor.



(Federation of German Amateur Cinematographers) of which Herr Bever-Mohr is President has had enough ups and downs in its 27 years of existence to test the keenness of the most enthusiastic. Its stand in the Cultural Section was manned by volunteers from the affiliated cine clubs. He asked us to convey his Federation's offer of hospitality to any British club members or lone workers who might visit Germany—there is to be an exhibition of amateur films in Frankfurt in May—and hopes that it might be possible to collaborate in the near future in the exchange of films. All of which goes to show that Photokina is not just a shop window designed exclusively to coax money out of the amateur's pocket.

Of the twelve British firms exhibiting, G.B. Equipments had the largest stand and very nearly the largest in the Cine Section. Ekco were well represented with their magnetic/optic sound equipment for Victor projectors, Ampro showed their Stylist Major Mk. III and Mole-Richardson, Taylor-Hobson, and Haynor were among others.

G.B. Equipments and their associated companies showed a large variety of their products,

the G.B. Bell & Howell 16mm. Autoload and the 630 magnetic/optical sound projector, in particular, exciting a great deal of interest. (We recognised the Italian Ambassador to West Germany among the distinguished visitors who lingered over them.) The American Bell & Howell company was exhibiting a new 8 mm. double-run camera, the 220 which should appeal to those who "can't be bothered with all those knobs and things". It has not been released for sale in U.K.

Niezoldi and Kramer, who manufacture the Nizo range of equipment, have introduced an improved Cine Nizo 16 model I which embodies a built-in exposure meter coupled with two of the lenses on the three lens turret and a reloadable film cassette which, loaded with 100ft. of film, enables black and white and colour film to be exchanged without loss of frames or need for rewinding. The camera operates at all speeds from 12 to 64 f.p.s. and has connections for an electric motor.

In the 8mm. field there is a significant

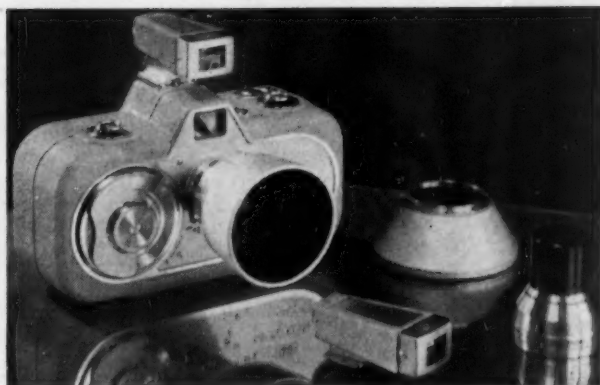
G.B. Bell and Howell showed a wide range of equipment, including their 630 magnetic stripe projector which attracted plenty of attention. The American Bell and Howell company displayed a new 8mm. double-run camera, not yet available in this country.



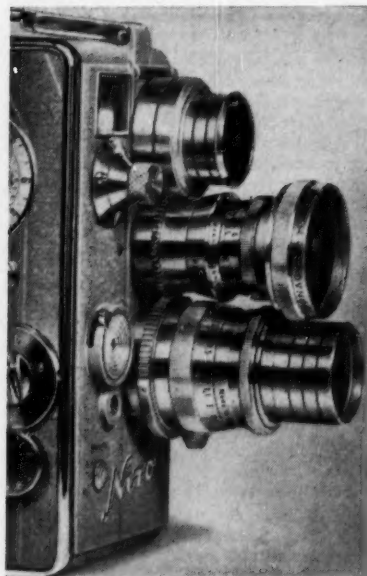
Supplementary lenses for the popular 8mm. Zeiss Movikon have been introduced. Telephoto and wide-angle attachments are available, together with special finders which fit on the camera accessory shoe.

development in supplementary lenses. The wide angle supplementary, the Ronagon is screwed to the front of the normal 12.5mm. lens, the composite being of 6.25mm., and the angle of view is then more than doubled without loss of aperture. A simple lens is clipped to the viewfinder to show the wide angle view. This accessory is available for use with the Nizo Heliomatic and S2T cameras and should be of great value to 8mm. users who have always suffered from a lack of wide angle lenses. A new cheaper Nizo, the Exposomat, combines the film cassette for double 8mm. film, the built-in coupled exposure meter and non-interchangeable Ronar f/1.9 lens. A telephoto attachment on similar lines to the Ronagon converts the Ronar to 25mm. focal length. Similar supplementary equipment is now also available for the Zeiss Movikon, introduced two years ago. The supplementaries will probably cost something like £20 each in U.K.

Nizo, Zeiss and Agfa have



Below, 'left': the improved version of the Cine Nizo 16 model I has a built-in exposure meter coupled with two of the lenses on the three-lens turret, a reloadable cassette and connections for an electric motor. Above: the same company showed a new animated viewer for 8mm. users.



introduced titlers for their 8mm. cameras and the Nizo editor for 8 and 16mm. should offer the Zeiss Moviscop considerable competition.

The other outstanding development in the 8mm. field was the Paillard Bolex Pan Cinor Zoom lens for the L8, B8, and H8 cameras. This remarkable f/2.8 lens has variable focal length from 12.5mm. to 36mm. and can focus down to 2ft. 6in. The cost is £129 3s. 9d., including tax! There is also a wide angle Switar f/1.8 5.5mm. which will be easier on the pocket. And it seems that more new equipment will arrive later this year. Other new 8mm. equipment included the Bauer 88 camera, mentioned in the March A.C.W., and three cameras offered by Ercsam of France; the Camex O.S. single speed, the Camex G.S. with four speeds, interchangeable lenses and parallax compensation, and the Camex V.U. having, in addition, a universal built-in viewfinder and optical parallax compensation. All these cameras are fitted with either Cinor Berthiot fixed focus f/2.8 or focusing f/1.9 lenses.

In the 16mm. field the emphasis was on the combined magnetic stripe/optical sound track system and there were some impressive demonstrations of G.B. 630 projector, the Ampro Stylist Major III (April A.C.W.),

Simplicity and continuity, two of the most important characteristics of any holiday or family film, are admirably achieved in *Island Artist*, the Ten Best winner. The films discussed below were less successful in the same contest, but they all merited leader awards. This analysis of their merits and weaknesses can help you with your personal productions.



Holiday and Family Films

"Keep them busy" is a good maxim for all directors, but it is never more important than when handling children. Believe it or not, young children are *less* camera conscious than adults. When they first see the camera they naturally want to know what it is, and they're bound to stare at it; but when they have become accustomed to it, they will ignore both camera and cameraman more completely than any adult could hope to, simply because they don't understand what's going on. Paint-boxes and plasticine soon become infinitely more absorbing than Daddy and his funny little box.

If ever a film proved this, it is T. H. Thoms's four star *Nursery School Days* (400ft., 16mm., Kodachrome), a delightful study of toddlers engrossed in their lessons and play. Delicious close-ups in excellent colour make this an entrancing film; particularly engaging is a sequence showing a young audience absorbed in a Punch and Judy show. Obviously the children weren't bothered by the camera—or, equally important, by the cameraman. He was content to film them behaving naturally without attempting to direct them at all.

Unrecognisable

Unfortunately, the film lacks real construction and continuity. Mr. Thoms has, it is true, added a kind of prologue and epilogue to the shots of nursery school activities, showing one child leaving home, meeting another and approaching the school; at the end of the film the same two children suddenly leave. But in neither sequence do we see them with the other children, and if they appear in the central sequences, only their mothers would recognise them. Undoubtedly the film would capture any audience's interest simply because of the subject matter of almost every shot; but a little more forethought and planning could easily have made it irresistible.

Planning *always* pays dividends. J. A.

and a note on endings

Burgess, whose four star family film, *Once Upon A Birthday* (400ft., 9.5mm., colour and monochrome), narrowly missed a trophy, appreciates the importance of preparation. This record of his young daughter's birthday will give immeasurable pleasure to friends and relatives in future years, and at the same time the film is worthy of a wider audience. After illustrating incidents during the birthday, the film shows a fairy story which comes to life—in Kodachrome—as it is read to the little girl. The story is an unusual version of Little Red Riding Hood, who is played by the little girl herself.

Subtle Links

The characters she meets on her way to her grandmother's—including Little Boy Blue, Bo-Peep, a scarecrow and a woodcutter—are played by the family. The details which link the family to their individual fairy-tale characters are neatly devised. Father, for instance, is seen in an early sequence chopping wood; in the story he plays the wood-cutter. The uncle who pointed out the scarecrow becomes the scarecrow. None of these link-ups interrupt the film for a moment, and they are all subtly and sparingly used.

But the "keep them busy" rule is only completely successful when the subjects are kept *naturally* occupied (unless they are unusually good actors). For example, in the earlier part of the film the little girl tries to collect several envelopes from the mat beneath the letter-box flap. She picks one up, tucks it under her arm, picks up another, drops the first, picks up one more, drops the second, and so on. This is one of the most delightful scenes in the film, for it springs quite naturally from the child's inability to manage more than one envelope at a time.

Cash Prizes for your holiday films

Add to the list of seaside resorts that are offering a cash prize of £15 for any Ten Best film set in their locality—Torquay. The list to date of holiday resorts making this offer is HOVE, ILFRACOMBE, ISLE OF MAN, TEIGNMOUTH, TORQUAY and WORTHING. These awards are not for publicity or documentary films of the places concerned. They are for holiday films—not a pictorial survey of the amenities of the resorts—but naturally the background must be adequately sketched in. It is immaterial whether you spend a fortnight or a day at any of them. What matters is that the film should be a real holiday picture. These additional prizes are for the 1954 competition which closes on 31st December next. Each Ten Best picture will, of course, win one of the handsome A.C.W. silver trophies—the Oscars of the amateur film world.



Footprints in the sand—a sight we've all absorbed subconsciously a hundred times on holiday. But how many of us realised that details like this could transmit the "feel" of a holiday? George Archer did—and *Holiday Boy* was a Ten Best winner as a result.

The Red Riding Hood scenes, on the other hand, show her and the family acting instead of just being themselves. Ironically, the child is the most successful player of them all, since she is the least self-conscious. Not that any of the family are embarrassing to watch; it is simply that the staged sequences cannot equal the charm of the apparently natural ones.

Holiday and travel films present their own problems of construction; shortage of time invariably aggravates the difficulties. It's impossible to plan every shot in advance, so there's almost bound to be at least a slight vagueness about the shape of this kind of film. But holidays are a vague sort of period. When you see the Ten Best, notice how George Archer's *Holiday Boy* reflects a holiday atmosphere by the very looseness of its construction.

Beverley Gardiner had an unusually difficult time problem in shooting his three star film, *Seabird Sanctuary* (275ft., 16mm., Kodachrome). He shot the film during two excursions to the Farne Islands, and only about twenty minutes were allowed on each of the islands visited. Moreover, though Mr. Gardiner

usually uses an exposure meter and tripod, his war disability—a leg amputation—meant that he could carry only the camera if he was to tackle the rock climbing successfully. "In some cases," he tells us, "I had to crawl along on all fours, and many shots were taken lying flat on my stomach." He adds, "I was helped tremendously by using a pistol grip." But the camerawork shows little of the author's difficulties—one salutes his triumph over them—the colour is good throughout and only in a few close-ups is there any camera unsteadiness—and that only momentarily.

The introductory sequence showing people embarking and setting out for the islands is very well handled. The continuity is smooth and the film flows comfortably. The body of the film principally consists of excellent close shots of birds with their nests and eggs, mostly introduced by rather laconic sub-titles. But though the subject arouses interest, the film is not sufficiently informative. Shots of birds being ringed, for example, could legitimately have been explained by a sub-title. As it is, we are left to guess at the purpose of the ringing. Nevertheless, this is a shapely production.

Uneven Commentary

How useful a commentary can be in covering continuity defects! But *West of the Lizard* (700ft., 16mm., Kodachrome, S.O.F.), Ronald English's two star holiday film (incidentally the only one of the magnetic stripe productions to gain a leader award) does not use this advantage to the full. The commentary is rather ponderous and not very well written. The old fault of explaining what is visually obvious is not altogether avoided, but some interesting background information is given.

A change from first person singular to first person plural half-way through is a rather careless mistake, and the fact that the film is a record of holiday is not made obvious until the last few minutes. However, the colour photography is excellent and the camerawork is very



Brenda Chamberlain, the subject of *Island Artist*, responds with a painter's sensitivity to her island home. E. E. Pritchard, the author of the film, responded to her surroundings with a cameraman's eye and a director's intelligence.



Though a rarer setting than the seaside for a holiday film, the river can be equally rewarding. Here members of the old Bedford F.S. Production Unit shoot a sequence for a documentary—*River Highway*, their first film.

disciplined. But it is a pity that the big close-ups of some fascinating local characters all show them staring straight into the lens. A "chat" with one of them is theatrically contrived in one long shot. The author shakes the man's hand, and the pair stand, acutely camera conscious, uttering unheard sentences; after another handshake, the author departs.

R. R. S. White has adopted an unusual continuity link for his two star holiday film, *It's In The Bag* (230ft., 8mm., Kodachrome). Each of the family—father, mother, and young daughter—dive their hands in a bag to grab cards showing what they are to do next—e.g., "croquet for you," "and for you, just watch." This is quite a neat and amusing idea, and it certainly helps to introduce each of the well-photographed sequences economically. But after going to such trouble to ensure his film is no mere snapshot album, Mr. White has several surprising lapses.

Pointless Cut-Aways

For instance, he gives a visit to a "magic cave" an introductory sequence all to itself, yet the cave is never shown. And although he uses cut-away shots to cover continuity jumps, several of the cut-aways are quite pointless in themselves. The little girl trips over; there is a sudden shot of the sea; the girl gets up. Obviously something was missing or went wrong in the middle of the shot; but the shot of the sea is almost as bad as having nothing there at all. The best cut-aways are big close-ups of people registering an appropriate emotion. A shot of the girl's mother looking a little apprehensive would have been invaluable here—and it could have been taken at home when the snag arose in editing.

One of the smoothest of the holiday/travel films entered was H. T. Dumbleton's two star *River Interlude* (400ft., 16mm., Kodachrome). The flow of this record of a river journey is only marred by a few picture postcard scenes

completely devoid of movement. Movement is essential to every scenic shot—and that doesn't mean camera movement of course. Not that Mr. Dumbleton fell into this beginner's trap; his camerawork shows hardly a wobble, and apart from one or two matching lapses, the colour is pleasant. Moreover, there is some effective cross-cutting showing the author and his wife apparently talking to each other, and they are featured more or less equally throughout the film. There is even one of those all too rare shots showing the pair together. Remote camera control can be invaluable for the film of a holiday taken by only two people, one of them the cameraman, yet it is so rarely used; and as a result the film gives literally only a one-sided impression of the vacation.

Troublesome Conclusions

River Interlude ends with a startling sunset; its unexpectedness is quite dramatic—and completely out of place. A few dusky shots could have softened the colours gradually and prepared the way for this scene. Mr. Dumbleton isn't alone in having trouble with his endings, of course. Even the most experienced clubs find it difficult to finish their films neatly. *Two Friends*, Crawley F.U.'s trophy winner, contained its final punch in a sub-title, always an unsatisfactory state of affairs. The original short story (briefly summarised in the article on page 162) had a satisfactory literary conclusion, but it should have been translated visually in this silent film. (Had the film a sound-track, the spoken command would not have interrupted the flow of pictures, and would probably have proved quite successful.)

When famous novels are "adapted" for the screen, a howl often goes up at the near-sacrilege of distorting, twisting and hacking about the story for the sake of the box office, but drastic alteration is often necessary when a work conceived in one medium is translated to a very different one. Of course, you might say that if a story needs to be considerably recast for visual presentation then it ought not to be filmed, anyway.

Adapting Maupassant

How would you react to a completely new ending to de Maupassant's *Two Friends*? The two captives, about to be shot as spies, are each offered their freedom if they will reveal the password ("Your friend will never know"). They refuse, and the film proceeds to its logical but uninspiring close. But suppose one of them weakened but that neither his friend nor the audience knew which? The two men face the firing squad. One will fall dead. The other will remain standing, unharmed.

The rifles crack out. A flock of birds wheels away in alarm. One pair of legs lies prone. The other pair stands erect. Which? That's an intriguing question with which to send the audience out into the night: and certainly the ending is entirely visual.

It is unpardonable to adapt de Maupassant

in this way? If it is only the end which is altered, doubtless you are right to think so. But could not the idea of the story be borrowed and another plot constructed round it, so that the film is "suggested by the de Maupassant story, *Two Friends*"? The ordinary cinemagoer may often be infuriated by such tactics, but the film-maker will be more sympathetic to the problems which beset the producer.

Alternatively a visual interpretation of the original ending might have proved effective. A close-up of frying fish doesn't sound a particularly neat conclusion, but with a little more emphasis on Morrisot's earlier remark and an appropriate build-up to this final shot it could have been quite satisfactory.

Poor Reward

High Wycombe F.S. missed a trophy simply because of the ending of *A Game of Robbers* (650ft., 16mm., s.o.f.). A four star leader award may seem poor compensation for the artistic skill which has been lavished on this story of a girl's attempt to steal an expensive dress from a shop, but the conclusion can only be described as a flat anti-climax. After the girl attempts to hold up the shop-keeper with an air pistol, which she accidentally fires, the shop-keeper tells her just how stupid she really is. He adds that he will let her go; she stands waiting.

"Do you expect me to give you the dress as well?" he asks. "No," she says quietly, "I don't want it now." And that's the end. There's nothing wrong with this final line, but it isn't given any aural or visual emphasis. However true to life such an ending may be, it isn't dramatically true. A film must end, not merely stop—and a proper end is achieved by present-

ing a climax as a climax and not just a cessation. It must in all fairness be added that *A Game of Robbers* has decisive action and very good acting beautifully presented in its pace and flow.

Another of the giants—Fourfold F.S.—narrowly missed inclusion in the Big Ten for similar reasons. Their four star film *Switchback* (600ft., 16mm.) has good acting, outstanding photography, and smooth editing—though the scissors could have been wielded more freely. The opening sequences show a young man picking up an attractive girl during a ride on Battersea Park switchback. During a later date together, he becomes drunk and attacks her. Trying to silence her screams he kills her. After hiding her body he discovers he has lost a tell-tale cigarette case, but when he returns to the spot where he left her, the body has gone. He looks around in fright, and sees the girl standing in the doorway of a ruined house. He follows her inside, bewildered. (This is a superb sequence, with an extraordinary sense of eeriness and tension.)

How Did It Happen?

Suddenly he recoils in horror—and the scene changes to the switchback. A newspaper on the ground announces the mysterious death of another man at the local "haunted house" and shows a photo of the man we have been following. A feminine shoe steps on the paper, and we see the girl, once again making her way towards the switchback.

This ending leaves a feeling of dissatisfaction—not merely because of the incomprehensibility of the supernatural element, though that is muddled enough. After all, if this extraordinary girl makes a habit of enticing men to the old

house and killing them, surely they don't all murder her first? But even allowing that the uncanny makes its own rules (girls will be ghouls), the film should state—or at least hint—how the man met his death.

It is artistically wrong in a medium as realistic as the film to present the *fait accompli* which can only be accepted in literature, where imagination does all the work. This is a case of effect and no cause; and the fact that the earlier sequences are so realistic—actually giving too much attention to detail—serves only to emphasise the mistake.



One of the fascinating things about cinematography is that there is always plenty to learn. Students on a course at Theyden Bois line up a Bolex H16.

Order out of chaos is all very well—but why create chaos in the first place? Technique should be recognised as a means, not an end in itself, so don't let the relationship of servant and master become confused. This plea for simplicity will provoke many arguments, but it should also show a glimpse of the wood to those whose vision is confined to trees.

Cut the Cutting!

By W. M. Van ESSEN, F.R.C.S.

The evolution of amateur films may be divided into four stages. We begin by shooting everything in sight and projecting all of it. Next we learn how to cut out the bits with the perforations showing, the blank lengths where the lens cap was left on by mistake, and a shot of ourselves, taken by someone else, which lacks dignity. If we ever graduate beyond this stage we are very likely to go to the extreme depths of stage 3, in which the most puerile domestic scene becomes a major production requiring all the artifices of our craft, followed by hours of Editing.

Well, Why Not?

Editing consists in cutting one's film into short pieces and sticking these together again in a different order after chipping a bit off each end. To the uninitiated it is not clear why the whole thing could not have been shot in the proper order, like a television play, but this idea brings a derisive smile to the face of a stage 3 cinematographer, whose delight is to bring order out of chaos. To achieve this it is first necessary to create chaos, and the enthusiast has no difficulty in doing this, as his victims will readily testify.

The most important factor in making a good chaos is the necessity for having a Scriptwriter, a Lighting Technician, a Cameraman, a Director and a Continuity Girl in order to film a small child playing with his Christmas toys, and since the owner of the camera is commonly the only person around who is familiar with the various functions of these characters, he has of necessity to combine them all in himself.

In the particular scene I have mentioned, the child refuses to conform to the script written for him; he will not be directed, and howls when confronted by 2,000 watts of illumination. Adults are even more stupid, and argue as well. Tempers run high before thirty feet have been shot, and at the end of the performance there is a mass of material that could hardly have been sorted out by Pudovkin; and one can easily conjecture what he might have advised the

amateur to do with it. However, people in Stage 3 lack the critical faculty, and eventually all the film is hacked about and projected as a "rough cut".

A certain lack of clarity every fifteen feet or so necessitates a Title, and out comes the Titling Outfit. Some amateurs have a quite extraordinary passion for titles. If the subject-matter of the film is abjectly trivial, its shortcomings are



Editing for the sake of editing is sometimes a sore temptation. If we had the professional's equipment, we'd probably find the pleasures of operating a moviola kept us from ever finishing a film at all! Here Richard Gordon (left), author of the novel from which Doctor in the House is adapted, is shown a few shots from the first rushes by producer Betty Box and director Ralph Thomas. The slickness of the editing is one of the main virtues of Doctor in the House (see page 168).

compensated for by titles of oriental magnificence, preferably in colour, with crimson letters on an emerald background. On the other hand, material that is intrinsically self-explanatory is broken up by the interpolation of embarrassingly facetious titles done on a typewriter.

The final process of Editing, that of Fine Cutting, goes on for months, because every time the *opus* is inflicted on his friends the creator perceives fresh possibilities for alteration. The one feature that is not interfered with is the Dissolve; although unfortunately placed between two scenes of indifferent merit, it was achieved at such a cost of time, calculation and manipulation that the amateur cannot bear to part with it, and indeed may herald its appearance on the screen by a remark from the projector in case it should be missed.

Some of the more ambitious Stage 3-ers appear to find painful any difference between



No sign of confusion here. A ten-man unit with clapper-boards and tripods may be ideal for drawing a crowd, but if natural backgrounds peopled by unselfconscious extras are your aim, you can't do better than conceal the camera in a stationary car. Focus F.U. shot all 900ft. of Judgment in White on location in eight weeks.

the local Odeon and their own projection arrangements, which presently acquire an elaborate proscenium with electrically-operated curtains and even a toy Wurlitzer. I admit that the more restrained of these aids to presentation are admirable, provided that the matter exhibited on the screen has qualities that deserve them. But nothing could be more ludicrous than a piece of filmic fumbling introduced by coloured lights, a bad tape-recording of organ music and imitation curtains parting with a slight jerk.

One-Sided Pleasure

It is not denied that a very great amount of pleasure is derived from amateur filming as outlined above; there is, however, a distinct tendency for the enjoyment to be confined to those concerned in making the films. Few of us miss Stage 3, and quite a number of us stick there, which is a pity. It is the stage of technical obsession, and one may perhaps remark (with great temerity!) that there is nothing very difficult about the basic technique of photography, whether still or moving, when it is compared with music or painting. In any branch of art the danger of making technique an end in itself is well recognised; if the sheer mechanics are comparatively easy, then any fool can do it, and many fools do, which I suppose is good for trade and brings prices down for all.

Natural and proper progress leads to Stage 4, in which technique becomes almost subconscious and entirely subservient to the artist's end in view, which is defined by Clive Bell as the creation of Significant Form. The finished product then attains a quality very difficult to name, in which there is little or nothing to show how it was done and one is tempted to say: "How simple! I could easily have done it myself, if only I had thought of it!"

And this brings us right back to the beginning,

since the great majority of amateur films are personal records of simple things, demanding a simplicity of treatment that they seldom get. As a step in the right direction, may I recommend an exercise for technically-obsessed amateurs? The next time you have something simple to record, such as a child's birthday, try shooting the whole thing on one camera loading of film (i.e., 100ft. of 16mm.) so that it can be projected subsequently without cutting.

To do this is by no means easy; it demands a great deal of thought, iron control in shooting, instinctive use of technical manipulations, and a sensitive knowledge of the medium. You will have to make an opening and a closing fade in the camera, and all the time between these you must keep right at the front of your mind three major considerations for every shot: is it essential? does it match with the previous shot? and will it match with the potential following shot?

In addition, you must watch focus, exposure, field, and lighting, and all the other purely mechanical matters; but these must be so subordinated that they occupy a much smaller portion of your attention than that devoted to theme, action and continuity.

No Real Difficulties

How difficult are the technical matters? They are not difficult at all. There is no excuse whatever for being out of focus; distances are clearly marked on every lens mount, it is easy to estimate distances sufficiently accurately by eye, and anyone can use a tape-measure. Exposure is merely a question of incident light readings plus a little common sense. Field is what you see in the viewfinder, and straightforward lighting (which is the only kind to be used until you reach Stage 4) can be learned from any book.

I would put a limit of four splices in such a film. These would be for leader and trailer and re-takes or shots spoiled by unexpected action, for I do not mean to suggest that shooting entirely in sequence will obviate the mistakes that all of us make. But I do suggest that filming under such conditions puts the highest value on the qualities of simplicity, ingenuity and resourcefulness.



8mm. VIEWPOINT



Determined to prove themselves worthy of a place behind the camera as well as in front of it, these pupils of Baptist Mills Secondary Modern School, Bristol, produced an 8mm. drama entitled *The Suspicious Character*. Left: the take board seemed a good idea—until it was discovered that the clapper boy's numbering was out of step with everyone else's. Above: the assistant director keeps her eye on actors about to enter a shot, while the director instructs those already in the scene. No. 2 cameraman stands on a chair in order to reach the lens.

By DOUBLE RUN

Young Idea on Youngest Gauge

For some time now, some lucky schoolchildren have been making films as part of their work in film appreciation. But *The Suspicious Character*, a 4-minute film made by a class of 14-year-old boys and girls at a Bristol Secondary Modern School, is perhaps the first to be made on 8mm. The photography is rather uneven, as the director of photography was obliged to under-expose certain shots by $1\frac{1}{2}$ stops so that the film could be finished in time. A note accompanied the film to explain this to the processors, but it did not seem to have much effect, as the under-exposed shots came out unpleasantly dark. Do the labs. ever pay any attention to such notes? I would like to see them offering a special service for dealing with badly exposed shots—after all, it is chemically possible to reduce an under-exposed shot until it appears fairly presentable.

A production unit of 17 children had worked on the picture and each of them had been given a definite job to do. For example, the No. 1 cameraman operated the camera while the No. 2 cameraman adjusted the lens. The technicians had been elected by popular vote, and it so happened that the No. 2 cameraman was not tall enough to reach the lens. So, as can be seen from the still (reproduced by courtesy of the official stills dept.), he took a chair on location with him!

The No. 1 director of photography calculated the exposure with an incident light meter (and so had only to point the meter at the main light source to obtain one definite reading), while his assistant measured the focus. Altogether, the children seem to have had little difficulty in

mastering the technical side of their jobs, and the actors gave very natural performances—thanks to the two young directors. None of the children had appreciated the importance of the director before they made the film. Now, even the actors admit that he is more important than the most glamorous star.

The story was well suited to the school environment: a flashily dressed spiv is suspected of stealing a girl's watch. The children scrag him—and then find that he is their new teacher. The treatment is quite effective, although it is perhaps a pity that the spiv's real identity had to be revealed by a sub-title, the only one in the film. However, such films should really be judged by the experience gained in making them, and I hope that many other schools will make similar films. After all, 8mm. is the gauge for gaining the most experience at the least expense.

Cheers from the Box Office

Is the 800ft. New Forest C.C. Coronation production, *New Milton Celebrates*, the most financially successful 8mm. film ever made? It was a truly co-operative effort, as Kodak 8/20, Sportster, Miller, Paillard L8 and H8, and Revere 88 cameras were all used to expose 13 rolls of daylight Kodachrome, 3 of Type A Kodachrome and 3 of Agfacolor. "Everything filmable was filmed . . . the first 50ft. were scripted, the rest shot more or less off the cuff with only camera angles pre-arranged."

Although the light on Coronation Day was poor, less than 25ft. was wasted because of bad

exposure, about 50ft. of alternative takes were cut out, and another 75ft. was discarded for a variety of reasons. "Knowing people would come to see themselves, we kept in as much as we could. To save slowing the tempo down with sub-titles, we had a microphone commentary, used sparingly with a background of appropriate music, for which we used about 50 records and two turntables".

More than 1,000 people saw the film in the

first four days—"and the club is now in a very strong financial position". Although the shots were carefully edited, the film was intended to be box-office rather than art—but what a good way for a club (especially one in a small district where everyone knows everyone else) to raise funds! My own club had a similar scheme for making a 16mm. film—but it fell through for lack of support. So I appreciate New Milton's achievement all the more.

POINTS ABOUT PACKAGE FILMS

I have been continuing my screenings of 8mm. package films, with a weather eye open for points of interest that will help us with our own filming. *Underwater* (Ron Harris Pictoreel, 175ft. monochrome) shows goggle fishing and a game of water polo in Florida. The underwater photography is very clear, and the print quality unusually good. The film has a fully cued leader and only one introductory sub-title. As it is a silent print of a sound film, it has to be projected at 24 f.p.s., and after a time one misses the commentary. The goggle fishing is self-explanatory, but this cannot be said of the water polo sequence, though it does contain some remarkable shots of the players' heads and arms splashing about above the surface while their bodies wriggle beneath it. This is something we might never be able to film, but we might produce a more enjoyable sequence if we managed to interest the audience in the players.

One great advantage of being an amateur is that one's approach can be—and usually should be—a purely personal one. Simplicity and sincerity are to the amateur what spectacle and a glossy finish are to the professional. Some amateur clubs forget this and turn out elaborate productions that have a high technical gloss but little personal insight or meaning. Perhaps this is why films made by individuals are often the most challenging and interesting.

Colour Cartoons at 24 f.p.s.

Alias St. Nick (Ron Harris Pictoreel, 150ft., Kodachrome) is of special interest as it is one of a series of colour cartoons now available on 8mm. It was produced by Rudolf Ising and has a fully cued leader. Again it was shot at 24 f.p.s. During the opening shots, when Mother Mouse reads aloud to her numerous children, the lack of sound is rather disturbing. Moreover, the colour of these indoor shots is rather gaudy. I think it would have been worth re-editing the silent version so that it began with the finely coloured and very effective shots of the villainous cat trudging through the snowstorm. Similarly, a later C.S. of a young mouse making some remark that we cannot hear might well have been omitted.

These are small points, but too many distributors are content to supply reduction prints of their sound releases without making any attempt to adapt them for silent screening. Others add so many sub-titles that one can

almost follow the plot without seeing the actors. I do wish that when distributors are considering which films to reduce, they would look at them critically *without* the sound track and then persuade the producers to re-edit where necessary.

In *Alias St. Nick* the fun really starts when the cat, disguised as Santa, persuades the mice to let him in. A fine climax develops when the wretched cat is pursued by a toy tank, a mechanical grab and several fire crackers, all directed at him by the gleeful mice. There are no sub-titles, the action is not unpleasantly violent and children will delight in it. An explosion is represented by a series of alternate red and orange frames; we could fake up fairly convincing explosions for our own films by a similar judicious use of single coloured, black or white frames.

Why No Commentary?

No Kidding (A.B.-Pathe Picette, 150ft., monochrome) is a very well photographed magazine film of interesting items: a man in a gorilla skin visits Chessington Zoo; the young children of Brighton firemen play with their own fire engine; two teams of Boston terriers play head-ball with a balloon; a young man, bound and hung from his ankles over a busy thoroughfare, frees himself (excitement is built up by the clever use of camera angle and editing); finally a fairground Rotor's walls are revolved at 60 m.p.h. with people pinned against them by centrifugal force.

There is not a single sub-title in the whole film, item following item without any explanation—save that provided by the very full list of contents printed on the carton. The items themselves have high entertainment value, but the lack of a commentary might well perplex an audience, especially as the sound system is given a credit at the end! In the copy viewed a white line was visible down the extreme right of the picture all the way through; my projector gate mask failed to conceal it. Apart from this, the print quality was good. Projection at 24 f.p.s. was necessary.

Elizabeth is Queen (A.B.-Pathe, 180ft., Kodachrome) is a fully cued (and, of course, much shortened) reduction print of the 24 f.p.s. Warnercolor original, and this may account for the rather yellow tone of the opening scenes. However, the rest of the colour is fairly pleasing,

and some of the shots inside the Abbey are really beautiful. Altogether, the film is an effective record with no technical faults. We clearly see the drive to the Abbey, the Coronation service, the procession, the crowds, the Royal Family on the balcony and the R.A.F. fly-past. There are no sub-titles.

Monochrome Shots in Colour Film

Coronation Regina (Dawn Trust, 200ft., Kodachrome) begins with shots of the Coronation decorations, and the Queen's drive to the Abbey. The scenes inside the Abbey are taken from the B.B.C. monochrome telefilm (they were not photographed from a TV set) and I found this 44ft. sequence rather disturbing in the middle of a colour film. It is always difficult to follow colour with b. and w. (I try to screen the colour films last in my own shows) and it is especially risky to use monochrome inserts. The producer has tried to get round this difficulty by tinting the sequence a brownish colour, but I do not think his example is one we should follow. However, one certainly gets much clearer and closer views of the Queen than in any of the other versions.

The film reverts to colour to show the return procession marching past at very considerable length. However, if appropriate military band records are played, the audience's interest may well be held. The final shot is of the Royal Family on the balcony—but I was not so conscious of the presence of a huge excited crowd as in the Pathe version. Shots of spectators always help to bring this sort of film to life. The cameramen obviously did not enjoy the same facilities as the *Elizabeth is Queen* unit and so have not achieved such a balanced record of the occasion. Some of the colour is a little watery and there are some awkward cuts, but the cameramen did quite a creditable job, and they shot at 16 f.p.s., so we get a longer film for our money!

Made by Amateur

Sailing Alone Around the World (Carlin Enterprise, 150ft., monochrome) is of special interest as it is an 8mm. dupe. of an 8mm. original. It thus gives a much crisper picture than most reduction prints. On the whole the photography and treatment are adequate, but there is not the gloss of the better professional productions. The story concerns a young man who pushes off from Plymouth in a tiny dinghy, gets shipwrecked on a desert island and is pursued by cannibals who finally eat him. The idea of having all sixteen parts played by the same actor adds to the film's interest, but I thought the earlier shots that do not rely on the novelty appeal the most entertaining. As so often happens, the best scenes are those in which the action is shown in C.S.; lengthy chase scenes in L.S. do not hold the interest so much.

I do not normally like sub-titles, but there are times when they can save us from elaborate

and tedious visual equivalents. So I was prepared to accept at least one of the two sub-titles in this film: "For many months he paddled resolutely on, until at last..." This was perhaps the simplest way of bridging the time gap, and it was also worded so as to arouse interest in the next shot without giving it away. One last point: this film is available for hire as well as for purchase. I wish it were always possible to inspect films in this way before we buy them. (Incidentally, the making of this amateur film was described and illustrated some time ago in *A.C.W.*)

Visitors' London (Scottish Instructional Films, 50ft., Kodachrome) has no sub-titles but is supplied with a typewritten foolscap sheet of commentary. The film takes us on "a 10 a.m.—6 p.m. tour of the famous sights of London", and was all filmed on August Bank Holiday Monday, 1953. As might be expected, it is rather scrappy. Some of the colour is disappointing—large expanses of white pavement, for example, do not seem to photograph well in colour. But there are some good shots of the Royal Horse Guards, and with the help of the very explicit commentary, it is possible to follow what is going on and recognise well-known buildings. If only the producer had not tried to cram all his filming into a single day, he could obviously have made a more impressive film. As it is, most amateurs could do as well—if they used a tripod.

Labs. at Fault?

Wester Ross—Loch Maree (Scottish Instructional Films, 50ft., Kodachrome) was also supplied with teaching notes but without sub-titles. Some fine shots of Highland scenery were rather marred as a few of them grew darker or lighter just before a cut. Were the labs. to blame for this? Also, as with *Visitors' London*, there were occasions when the picture momentarily blurred near the beginning of a shot and then immediately jumped back into focus. Perhaps a faulty camera was to blame. I once experienced this fault when I used an old second-hand model.

There were also some doubtful cuts (e.g., from a panning shot to a stationary one, the camera not being allowed to come to rest before the cut was made), and some imperfect colour matching. But the film ended with a picturesque shot of the golden waters of the loch sparkling in the setting sun, and the magnificence of the scenery encouraged one to overlook the uncertainty of the technique.

Falling Title Letters

How can title letters be made to fall away from their background while a title is being filmed? A good way with non-adhesive letters is to begin filming with the titler in a vertical position, and then tilt the whole thing over until it is horizontal, by which time the letters should have slipped away. If the camera is securely fixed to the titler, no movement should be apparent on the screen.

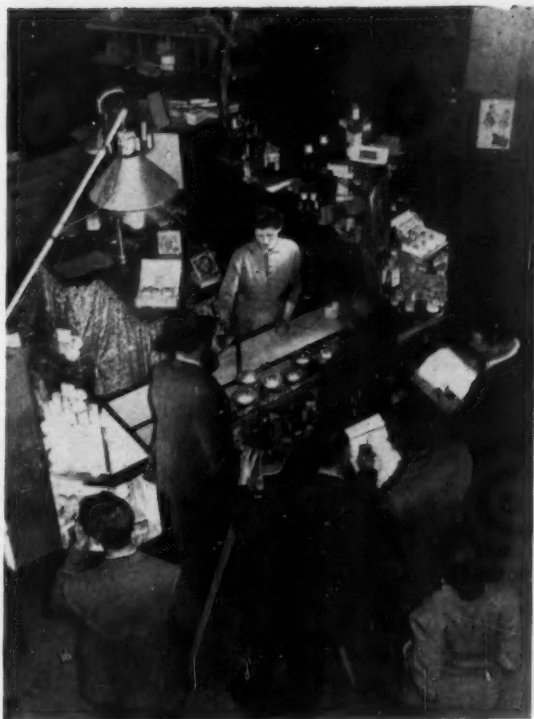
Three hours in a large draper's shop, and 38 shots to be taken! After all the shouts of "Impossible!" had died down, Ardleigh House Community Association C.G. decided to have a go—and they still found time to pay attention to the script!

One Night Stand

By D. LEGGETT

Have you ever shot a complete film in one night? The Ardleigh House Film Group managed it, putting 38 shots in the can—or should it be bag?—in a period of 3½ hours. This is how it came to be done. A short film was needed to complete their shooting programme so plot discussions were held to find a suitable script. Nothing for the Ten Best originated from this, but an idea for a 10-minute comedy did receive general approbation. It required a complicated interior set of a shop, but this did not deter the Group. Someone had a contact with the owners of a large local store, and he thought they might co-operate.

The store owners agreed, but suggested that the shop (a large general drapers of several buildings and floors) should only be used for one Saturday night between 5.30 and 8.30. The reaction to this was quite normal. "Impossible!" stated the technically adept—but the less well informed element persuaded the assembly that they should examine the problem in more detail before rejecting the offer. So



a script was commissioned from one of the more experienced "elders".

There was another conference with the shooting script on view, and this time no-one was brave enough to face the rabble with the suggestion that it couldn't be done. Plans went ahead; two production units, Groups A and B, were formed. Two 16mm. f/2.8 Ensign Kinecams were chosen from the club's equipment, and checked for framing; and one member was made responsible for all exposures. The

two cameramen, two directors and the electrician were asked to make a "reccé" of the shop, looking for suitable sets and reporting back with stills of them. Rehearsals followed on mock-up sets in the Group's quarters, and camera angles and approximate light positions were sketched.

Here there was a snag. There was only sufficient lighting equipment for one set, the lights being two 2kW Tungsten floods (affectionately nicknamed fish fryers), two Mercury

(Continued on page 194)



The glass shelf fronts of the lingerie counter meant a serious risk of halation. There wouldn't be any opportunities for retakes, so Ardleigh House Community Association C.G. took no chances. Pushing the glass back disposed of the danger.

Something that is not easy to do, yet is clearly important, is for the film maker to understand the mentality of the person watching his film. One small facet of this huge problem is the

it back by feel on to the supply spool.

(4) Re-load camera (in daylight) in the normal way.

(5) Shoot the second half of the superimposition, to suit noted duration. It helps if your normal loading routine is invariable, i.e., the amount of film used in threading should be constant. It is easy with very little practice to unload a camera in the dark, and as soon as the film has all been firmly wound back on to the supply spool, you can again work in the light.

You Simply Must Superimpose

appreciation of the fact that something commonly seen usually becomes conspicuous by its absence. Let me illustrate this by taking superimposition as an example.

I doubt if there is a cinema programme in the country which does not contain several examples of superimposition, even excluding superimposed titles. The same applies to TV. Accordingly, audiences expect to see some superimposed material in the course of watching screened pictures. Hence, if your films contain no superimpositions, there is one tangible item which they lack in comparison with so-called "professional standards".

Real Horrors

Not that all superimpositions are artistically worthwhile: from time to time one sees real horrors. But that is not the point. In general they are accepted as a useful cinematic device, they are a recognised convention of the screen, and their absence is undoubtedly noticeable.

Most amateurs who have never done any superimpositions have probably held back for two reasons: (a) their camera will not wind back, and (b) they are uncertain about exposures. In practice superimpositions are infrequently required, say about once every two minutes or so. Happily, this means that they can always be done at the start of a reel, the procedure being as follows:

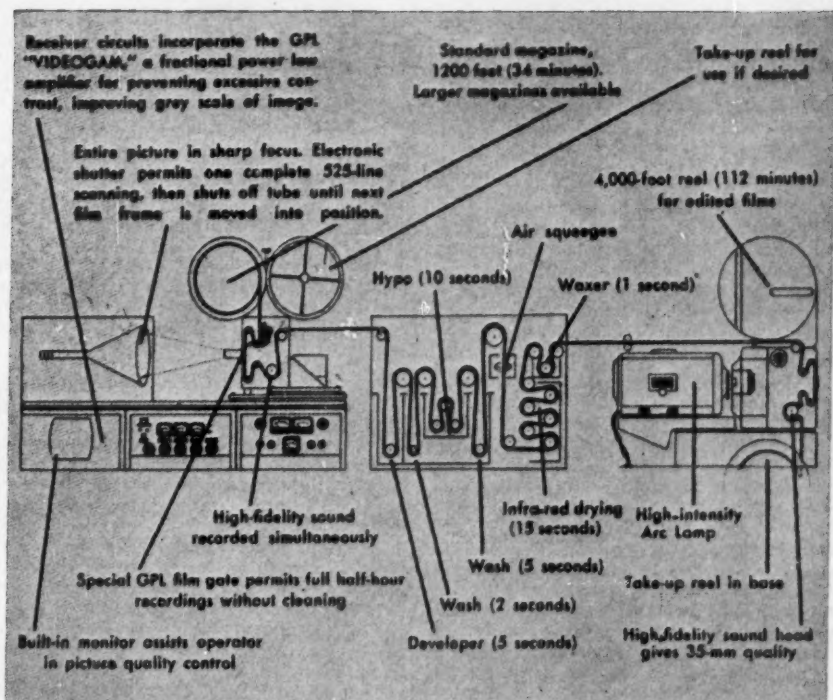
- (1) Load camera in the normal way.
- (2) Shoot the first half of the superimposition, noting duration.
- (3) In complete darkness open camera, remove film, wind

The seconds hand of a wrist watch is adequate for noting the duration of the shot or shots for superimposing though, of course, a stop watch helps: and with cameras having vague footage indicators, use of a stop watch further aids the start mark, because you can use an exact measured length for threading and then run an exact timed length to the first frame, based on the leader length which the film maker will let you know on request. In the case of magazine-loading cameras, accuracy is easier but it is often a bit trickier to wind back the film in the dark (though this is purely a matter of practice).

As for exposures in superimposition effects, here is the line of reasoning: if the two shots have no effect on one another, both get full normal exposure. If they affect one another completely, each gets half normal exposure. In between, pro rata. An example of the first type is the superimposing of white lettering on a dark part of a picture: you film the title against a matt black background at normal exposure, and you film the picture at normal exposure, neither



Sound Track argues that by now audiences have a right to expect superimpositions: they're equally accustomed to glamour, but it's a rare amateur film which risks challenging the professional in this field. Kingsway F.U. sought to right matters in their production of Reggie's, a newsreel of an entertainment given by Kings College Union Society.



The "Video" arrangement, described by Sound Track in "Dizzy Speed" on page 152. The whole operation from TV image to projection occupies a period of one minute. (From The Journal of Photographic Science, Vol. 2.)

affecting the other. An example of the second type is a mid shot of man reclining in deck chair superimposed on long shot of himself mowing the lawn: here, both pictures fill the frame and each contributes throughout to the exposure of the other, so you under-expose each by one stop from normal, the frame thus receiving its full exposure in two bites.

In between these extremes, you must use judgment, depending both on the contribution of each shot to the total exposure, and on the degree of emphasis you wish to impart to the parts of the shot.

So much for the routine. Now, the applications. Main titles are a strong claimant for attention: it is really very little trouble to shoot the main title in white lettering, preferably bunched at a defined part of the frame, and then, having wound back the film, to shoot the background, giving both normal exposure but ensuring a dark area to show up the white lettering. It is also labour-saving, and it provides a link, to run on THE END title at the same time, using the same background. This has the slight psychological advantage of sending the audience away with their minds lingering on a superimposed THE END in recognised professional style.

Other applications, with one—or more, for the process can be repeated as many times as you like—pictures superimposed on another, include

dreams, thoughts, flash-backs, sign-posts, travel-links such as car-wheels on landscapes, and the usual montage conventions. Aided by a stop watch, a mix or lap-dissolve is done by fading the first shot and fading on the second after the winding-back.

Not so Mouldy

A year ago in *A.C.W.* I described how one small drop of Eugenol on a piece of blotting paper placed with a reel of film in box or tin will prevent the growth of mould. Your dentist will provide a few drops of the stuff: my only worry was whether it would affect the dyes in colour film. So I took four discarded colour shots, tore each in two, and put one set of halves in an envelope and the other set in a film tin containing four large drops of Eugenol on blotting paper.

Now, a year later, I find no deterioration of the film in the tin on checking it against the reference pieces in the envelope: and since the tin contained eight times the normal Eugenol dose, I really feel quite safe in using the stuff as a mould-deterrent. I think it is important to be sure the Eugenol does not come into actual contact with the film—or the reel, for that matter. The vapour does the job.

It seems that the old bogey of humidifying is

almost dead at last. Unless you keep your films in a hot cupboard, or by a boiler, or in fact anywhere with unusually dry atmosphere (and to do so would be very foolish), humidifying is not necessary in this country. But it is essential in hot climates and in parts of America.

Dizzy Speed

It is certainly good going, to be able to project a film of an event *one minute* after the event occurred. The diagram shows a gadget for doing it, known as the "Videofilm". It hails from across the Atlantic, and is described in a paper reported in the *Journal of Photographic Science* for Jan./Feb., 1954. The combined TV

and camera unit has 1,200ft. film reels, and no shutter, the TV picture being electronically controlled so that one complete scanning per film frame is made, and then the tube is shut off until the next frame is in position. The film then either goes to a conventional take-up, or proceeds to the processing units, with times as shown in the diagram. It finally passes to a projector unit of a standard sound-on-film type.

Points that intrigue me are the 5-second washing, and the fact that the sound is photographic. But this machine was first described in an American journal, the *Motion Picture Herald*, in January 1951, so possibly by now magnetic sound is used, as this would perhaps ease the processing problems.

NOVELTIES AND NOTIONS

(Continued from page 139)

and the Victor with the Ekco system. The Arriflex 16mm. camera was being closely examined by the more advanced workers. It is probably the most advanced 16mm. camera yet. Although only 6½ lbs. in weight, with its three lens turret it offers many facilities usually associated only with 35mm. cameras. An 8 volt rechargeable battery pack will run 2,000 feet of film through the camera, the heart of which is the mirror reflex viewing system which enables you to view, frame and focus the scene while the camera is running. This is accomplished by mounting the rotary 180° shutter at 45° to the optical line and mirroring the front of the shutter so that each time it closes, the image from the lens is reflected into a prism and back through an eyepiece which contains a 10x magnification, giving you the feeling that you are actually looking at the screen as you shoot.

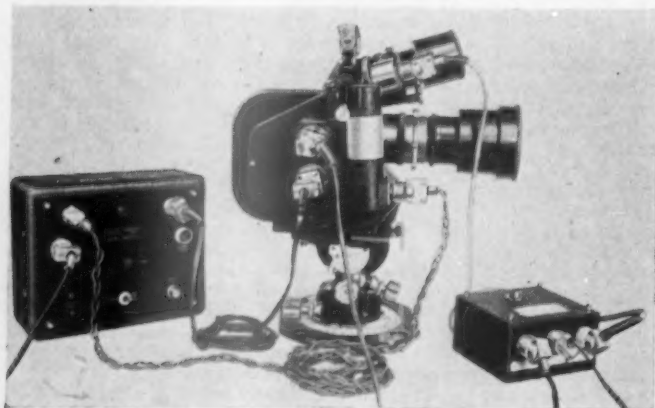
Other features are the matte box filter holder and the interchangeable 400ft. film magazine when the normal daylight 100ft. spools are insufficient. Speeds from 1 to 48 f.p.s. are governed by a tachometer built into the back of the camera, giving the cameraman a sure check on the actual speed. Synchronisation with sound is possible when the A.C. motor is fitted.

For the 9.5mm. fan Patex demonstrated their cameras and projectors but there seemed to be little that was really new.

With regard to synchronisation of sound, owners of the Bolex G projectors will be interested in the coupling of the Magnetron sound head and amplifier into the film path, enabling magnetic stripe and optical track film to be projected. Tape recorders, seen in profusion in 1952, now seem to have taken a back seat, ousted perhaps by the advances made in sound projectors and magnetic stripe film.

There were many accessories—titlers, editors, folding screens, etc.—but nothing really new or likely to be of much interest to the British market except perhaps for an ingenious coupled rangefinder, the Focameter, for fitting to cine cameras. The camera lens is focused at infinity and focusing is then carried out automatically by operating the Focameter knob. What is important for people who wear glasses is that one does not have to peer through a little peephole, the eyepiece being so constructed that the eye can be some distance from it.

If any trends are to be observed in Photokina they are probably an attempt to simplify simple cameras still further and to make elaborate equipment still more elaborate. The happy mean seems to be diminishing, and this could have the unfortunate effect of widening the gap between the tyro and the advanced worker. But for the health of the cine movement we need a strong "middle" class.



Here's luxury equipment indeed—the Camiflex Standard 16-35, incorporating provision for time lapse shots, and remote control up to three miles. The camera uses both 16 and 35mm. film—the only alteration necessary is to change the magazines! Other features include hand, clockwork motor or electric drive and reflex focusing. The special divergent turret takes a complete range of lenses from 13mm. to over 500mm.



exchanged here

Letters for publication are welcomed, but the Editor does not necessarily endorse the views expressed. Address: "Amateur Cine World," 46-47 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2.

8mm. AND 12mm.

Sir,—Mr. Scotson's letter in the May issue suggests that it is difficult to obtain copies of 8mm. films. If he communicates with Messrs. Gevaert, London, N.W.10, he will find that 8mm. monochrome copies can be made at a cost of fourpence a foot, subject to a specified minimum footage of, I believe, 50ft. I had about 100ft. copied recently and the result is perfectly satisfactory. I did, however, take the precaution of having the original film thoroughly cleaned before having it copied.

With regard to Mr. J. Birch's criticism of edge fogging on 8mm. and 16mm. films, I don't think he realises that the remedy is entirely in the hands of the camera-user. This sort of thing only occurs at the beginning and end of a reel of film, and, if the film has been correctly loaded and unloaded, on that part of the film which is additional to the normal 25, 50, or 100ft. lengths. In short, it occurs on that part of the film which is not intended to be used. If it is used, it is surely tantamount to a gardener planting potatoes a month earlier than the due date, and then although they are frostbitten, having them cooked and inflicted upon a guest at dinner.

The point I would like to stress is that when this sort of thing does occur the remedy is available. If I get sprocket-hole "ghosting" on a 9.5mm. film, I have no remedy. I am being robbed of the legitimate use of that part of the film which I am entitled to expect will be available to me after processing. No user of 8 or 16mm. is disappointed or surprised when the beginning or end of his film is fogged, provided he gets his full 50 or 100ft. properly processed. It would be a different matter if, periodically, fogging occurred *without reason* in the middle of the film.

Two for the Price of One

At a recent meeting of the Preston and District C.S. our Chairman, Mr. Alec Atkinson, gave us a talk on 12mm. film. Yes, 12mm. film! He masked half the gate of the club's 16mm. camera, so that when he loaded it with 8mm. double run film, the equivalent of two 8mm. frames would be exposed simultaneously. In shooting, he held the camera at right angles to the normal taking position. The film has been forwarded to the laboratories for processing. In projection, the film should, of course, be shown with the 16mm. projector on its side. I may say that the 16mm. projector-owners show a marked reluctance to co-operate. However, one of them has agreed to mask half his projector

gate and to tilt the machine as much as possible, so that the image will fall on the ceiling. The audience will view the picture from a point at right angles to the projector—that is, unless one of our optical experts can design a system of mirrors and prisms to enable the image to be projected on the screen in the normal way.

The idea behind this apparently wild and berserk experiment is that by purchasing 16mm. Kodachrome at 72s. per 100ft. and having it split down the middle, one obtains exactly the same running time as from two 25ft. reels of 8mm. double run film which would cost 56s., but with a picture twice the size. In other words, a picture twice as big is obtained for two-sevenths extra outlay! Of course, there is a little matter of redesigning a projector and, to a lesser extent, a camera, and then, of course, the present 4 x 3 ratio of the screen and gate. This will now presumably have to be something in the region of 3 x 2. Well, we can only wait—and pray. Please note: we haven't got the film back from processing yet!

Finally, can anyone tell me where I can obtain 100ft. 8mm. cans? Why it should be easy to obtain 100ft. reels and difficult to obtain the cans for them is beyond me.

PRESTON.

W. F. RICHARDSON.

WEATHER AND PICTURE QUALITY

Sir,—I have followed with considerable interest the battle of Messrs. Brentnall and Baker about that brilliant 5ft. 6in. picture which Mr. Brentnall claims to obtain with his Noris projector. Since I am not a possessor of this somewhat remarkable machine, I can lay no claim to being an authority on its merits or otherwise. However, I am prepared to believe that Mr. Brentnall does achieve a very creditable picture on the size of screen which he uses.

Before the war, I was regularly using that doyen of all 9.5mm. projectors, a 200B on a 8ft. x 6ft. silver screen, and the picture left very little to be desired; indeed, on the majority of films it was very bright. My two machines entertained approximately 200 people every week at one performance, and no complaint whatsoever was passed on to me regarding their performance. (The usual comments concerned the expertness of the operator putting on such a magnificent show!)

As for Mr. Baker and his Victor, the king of 16mm. sound projectors, while in the Forces during the war, I used an American Victor 40B with a 14ft. screen made out of sewn together bed sheets, with a throw of approximately 75ft. The brilliance of the picture was adequate, as

the prints, particularly Universal and Paramount, were extremely good. The only time the picture quality dropped off was when the wind was blowing through the top of the hall in the wrong direction. About 400-500 men all puffing away at cigarettes and pipes often made it necessary to go within 4ft. of the screen to make sure the picture was alright for focus. Still, I was quite satisfied. And the sound? Excellent. One ex-operator thought I was using a 35mm. machine until he visited the box. No, I haven't got a Victor yet, but one day—well, I can have ambitions, can't I?

NOTTINGHAM.

G. B. JONES.

PROGRESS IN FRANCE

Sir,—You will be interested to learn that 8mm. is making headway here in France, particularly now that prices have been reduced. One can now get an 8mm. camera and projector for about £36 (e.g., Sommor camera and Armor projector) and the results are very satisfactory. 9.5mm., on the other hand, does not show a comparable advance, despite the good apparatus available, owing to 9.5mm. film developing not always being as carefully done as it should be, whereas 8mm. and 16mm. developing is very clean.

Colour and magnetic sound were the stars of this year's photographic show at the Musée des Travaux Publics, Paris. Supplies of colour film are satisfactory here in contrast to the position in England, as I see it in *A.C.W.* I hope that the situation will improve for you this year.

PARIS, XIc.

ANDRE PAGETY.

THOSE OLD DAYS

Sir,—Your correspondent, Mr. R. Dowden, may be interested to know that I, as well as himself, was rather perturbed that *Gaiety of Nations* was given such prominence in the report of my discussion at the I.A.C. convention. Perhaps a little explanation is due. I was asked some time ago whether I would "participate in a discussion" about the relative merits of the old amateur and the new, and it was not until a day or two before the Convention, when I got my printed programme, that I realised that this was to be a full-dress two-man debate, and on enquiry discovered that my opponent was coming fully armed with film examples. It was too late and I was much too busy to collect examples from other sources to support my own argument, so I just grabbed three films in my possession and took them along. *Gaiety* was only to illustrate one aspect of the argument.

As to whether there were other films of equal merit in those days, most certainly, yes. As to whether we produced fifty films in five consecutive years comparable with the past five years' Ten Best, no; the hobby was young, there were considerably fewer people engaged in it, and the work was more difficult and frustrating from a technical point of view, but I am of the opinion that an equal proportion of bad, indifferent and really good films were made then as now. (The stage has not shown any marked general improvement in standard in a

couple of thousand years or so; I cannot imagine that such a closely similar art as the film could have attained any marked increase of standard in a mere 25 years.)

Finally, as to whether *Gaiety* is a "rather tatty old picture", it is not we who were associated with its making who have accorded it eminence in the past quarter of a century, but a constant succession of outstanding judges. Perhaps Mr. Dowden has rather confused discourtesy with controversy.

HAMPTON HILL,
MIDD.

GEORGE H. SEWELL.

We were glad to give *Gaiety of Nations* the attention which is its due, but perhaps George is being a little too modest in implying that to devote one paragraph out of 26 to it was to give it too much prominence? We also mentioned the American amateur film, *Fall of the House of Usher*, which he also screened.

FINE CUTTING

Sir,—May I say to Mr. Roberts-Wray (who comments (May) on "The Plain Man's Guide to Editing") and his torch-lit secretary, "To each his own devices, Sir!" I can't say I'm keen on the idea of attaching paper clips to cine film—there is quite a risk of cockling if they are left on too long.

But I do most emphatically take issue with him when he questions the necessity of separating each shot from its neighbours at the commencement of the editing session. The elimination of the over-exposed and jerky frames is not the real point, as Mr. Roberts-Wray seems to suggest. The fact is that the cameraman, professional or otherwise, who can shoot-to-a-frame is yet to be born. On the other hand, cutting-to-a-frame is perfectly simple—if you take the trouble. Far too many people don't take the trouble.

The sensible thing to do, surely, is to slightly over-shoot at each end of the shot and prune down to the exact frame on the editing bench. The imp of laziness who whispers in the editor's ear, "Leave it in—it'll avoid the splice", is then scotched at the outset. Seeing a sequence of separate shots hanging from the pin-rack stimulates the imagination—any arrangement or juxta-position is possible (hang the script!). Cutting then becomes a continuation of the act of creation and not mere tidying up.

Please, a splice per shot!

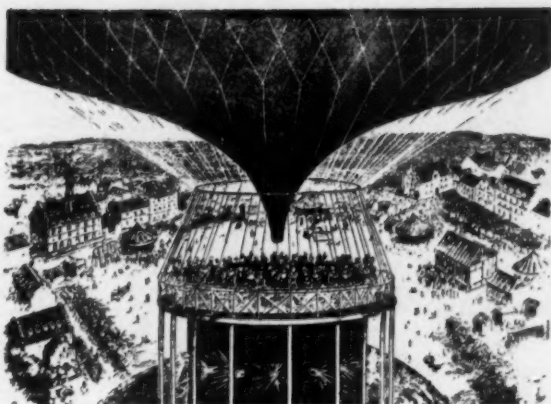
ROCHDALE.

KEITH W. BROOKES.

INTERMITTENT SPROCKET

Sir,—There has been reference in the correspondence columns of *A.C.W.* recently to sprocket driven 16mm. projectors. I have recently picked up an old German intermittent sprocket machine—a Lytax, with a Klangfilm soundhead, amplifier and speaker. This works surprisingly well; the quality of the sound is good, although so far I have not eliminated a small amount of wow. The intermittent sprocket is aluminium alloy and the teeth were worn almost completely off. As a *tour de force* measure I gave it a set of "dentures"—i.e., I drilled and tapped the bases of the old teeth $\frac{1}{16}$ in. Whit., screwed in studs and filed them up with watch-makers' files, using a powerful magnifying glass.

Does the basket of that balloon look overcrowded? Now look at those flashes beneath the basket. You still don't get it? Believe it or not this woodcut from the *Scientific American Supplement* for 1st September, 1900, shows a crowd being entertained by a 360 degree version of Cinerama. 1954's three projector system would have seemed a miserable affair to Raoul Grimoin-Sanson, the pioneer who invented and patented Cinerama, as he called it. He used ten synchronised projectors with a screen 30ft. high. The spectators were quite literally surrounded by merging colour films taken with ten synchronised cameras. All this, incidentally, took place at the Paris Exposition in—yes, we repeat—1900. At the same Exposition the Lumiere brothers showed their colour films on a screen 48ft. x 69ft. with an audience, at a single viewing, of 25,000. (Woodcut reproduced from *Image, George Eastman House Journal*.) The picture below shows what is claimed to be today's largest screen in the world's largest cinema, Radio City Music Hall. The screen is 70ft. wide—which beats those old-fashioned Lumiere brothers by a full twelve inches!



Strange to say, the result is quite satisfactory. Using the bases of the old teeth as guides, I could get the working face of the teeth quite accurate, but of course the tooth profile is only approximate. (I have no milling machine). The film works perfectly smoothly over the teeth and the picture is quite steady.

NEW RADNOR

RICHARD H. JOBSON (DR.).

CIRCULAR SCREENS

Sir,—I had a good chuckle at the note following my letter published in the April issue. Actually, though, the idea of a screen completely surrounding the audience isn't as new as all that. Believe it or not, I've seen one in use! But it wasn't what you might call a normal cine screen. It was an ingenious gadget the Navy use for training officers in battle drill. It consists of a ship's bridge mounted inside a hollow sphere, and multiple projectors underneath the bridge throw images on the walls to look like the sea and sky, complete with enemy battleships, etc.

The whole thing is controlled from a room outside the sphere, and a small hole in the ceiling lets the operators see what is going on inside. Sound effects, wind and spray, explosions and the movement of the ship are all

simulated. When I was on the bridge I really felt as though I was on a ship. The illusion is so strong it takes quite a while to readjust oneself after the exercise is over. Although I'm a 3-D fan, this is by far the most realistic movie technique I've ever seen.

In America, there is a similar apparatus in use. Who invented it? A chap called Fred Waller—the genius who invented Cinerama, which is, after all, only a pint-size imitation of the 360° screen. How do the audience get out? Well, I used a trap-door in the floor!

HAVANT.

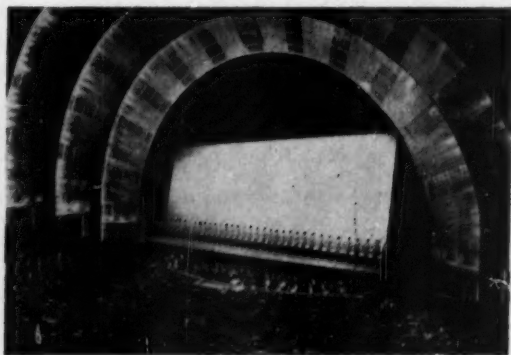
DONALD JEATER.

The other Services had these arc trainers, too—and probably still use them. And there was a circular screen even in 1900. (See illustration on this page).

POINT IN CASE

Sir,—In "On and Off the Target" (April issue), the following comments are given on one of our cameo films, *In Brief*: "Two men steal a suitcase containing only a jar of vanishing cream. The slinky type who awaits them applies the cream to her arm, and vanishes. And that's all. Not enough is it?" We quite agree: *That* is not enough, and we should never have felt justified in wasting 100ft. of stock—especially Kodachrome—on such a slender plot. But in actual fact there is rather more to the film than just that, and a good deal more thought went into the making of it than might be assumed from the above comment.

We did, indeed, intend to lead audiences up the garden, and so far they have re-acted quite favourably to this "gag" advertising short. Admittedly *In Brief* has been seen only by small intimate gatherings so far. Larger audiences might not share the joke so readily; and we had already agreed, before this extra publicity, to see what larger audiences would think of it. It will replace *Ready to Depart* on our composite reel, since this film is intended to be used with a tape-recorded accompaniment. In conclusion,



The last word in wide screens? Read the caption to the illustration above.

may we make a slight alteration in the above plot outline; it is not a suitcase, but a briefcase. Hence our title for this short film.

ANON FILMS,

S. G. P. ALEXANDER.

SOUTH RUISLIP.

Well, that clears things up, but larger audiences will no more be able to share the joke than we were unless they are told what the joke is. In the copy of the film submitted to us there was not the slightest indication that the film was designed as a publicity gag.

NOT SO MUCH FUN

Sir,—Since I left Ireland for America over a year ago I have been receiving your wonderful magazine regularly. There are quite a number of cine magazines here but none up to the standard of yours. How I wish A.C.W. was published fortnightly instead of monthly! I would say that, proportionately, more people here own cine equipment than at home, but they don't get the same enjoyment from it. The majority use their camera snapshot fashion and I haven't seen much evidence of planning in their work. Of course, I am but a comparative stranger here, so my opinions are not to be treated as gospel. One big drawback from my point of view is the absence of 9.5mm., for I left over 1,000ft. of family records, etc., in this gauge in Ireland. Is it possible to have an 8mm. copy made of these?

I notice that the war of the gauges is still going on and I think it's a very healthy sign. For myself I started with 9.5mm. and although circumstances have forced me to take up 8mm., I'm still a nine-fiver at heart. Best wishes to A.C.W. and all cine fans at home!

DETROIT 35, MICHIGAN. ALEC MARRON.

After such kindly encouragement we take it as hard that we have to give an unhelpful answer to our correspondent's enquiry, but the sad fact is that so far as we can trace there is not at present any service for reducing 9.5mm. to 8mm. It's a question we are quite often asked.

PACKAGE FILMS

Sir,—I would like to refer Mr. Stuart White who writes so unfavourably on Coronation Films (May) to Double-Run's "Ideas from Package Films" in the April issue. While I do not agree with everything he wrote, his article contained some useful criticisms of practical value both to perspective purchasers and commercial producers of these films.

Mr. White's letter, on the other hand, contains no constructive criticism except perhaps to tell us that the cutting technique employed in whichever make of Coronation Film he happened to buy was too fast for his liking. His assertion that the colour was shocking is hardly consistent with the somewhat grudging admission that some shots were good, and certainly not a fair one if, in fact, one of the reels he originally bought was a faulty copy.

Every serious film producer, amateur or professional, strives for uniform quality. In the case of the newsreel type of production, complete consistency is seldom achieved and I have yet to see a film of this type in which there is perfect quality throughout. With one thing I am in complete agreement with Mr. White:

his statement that "a purchaser should receive value for his money". That is the aim of all of us engaged in our particular side of the film business. If Mr. White thinks otherwise, I feel sure he will find many other things on which to spend his money.

LONDON, W.14.

J. K. BENEY,

Walton Sound & Film Services.

NOT PLAYING

Sir,—I think that when Mr. Baker says Mr. Brentnall is "playing" with 9.5mm. silent films he leaves himself open to criticism. I have been in this game myself for some eight years, and have had the pleasure of taking part in and seeing some of Mr. Brentnall's amateur 9.5mm. silent films. I can assure Mr. Baker that their production cannot be described as "playing"—nor is the editing or even the projecting of these films "playing" either.

If everybody took Mr. Baker's view it would be a very poor lookout for the manufacturers of 9.5mm. equipment. Many cine enthusiasts use 9.5mm. and 8mm. for reasons of economy alone. As for Mr. Brentnall's claims in respect of the performance of his 100 watt Noris, I have personally seen the machine in action and I very willingly support every statement he has made regarding it.

LEEK.

ARTHUR CROSSDALE.

COMPARISONS

Sir,—For several months past I have followed up the war between 9.5mm. and 16mm. I am a keen enthusiast with no bias towards either gauge. For 4½ years I have been a 35mm. cinema projectionist. Originally I was a 9.5mm. fan and later changed to 16mm., so I have experience of both gauges. If 9.5mm. sound is equal to 16mm., why do mobile units use 16mm. when 9.5mm. would show an immense increase in their profits? Why do studios use 16mm. for stock shots when 9.5mm. would save space? The answers are obvious.

I shoot on 9.5mm. for reasons of economy, and limit my 9.5mm. screening to silent films. But for a sound show I always use 16mm.

With reference to the letter from Mr. Wilson of Hull, the G.B. K16 and G.B. L16 both have 200 watt lighting, but the L16 has a bigger amp. output. Both are excellent machines—and then there's the B.T.H. S.R.B. with 300 watt lighting. The G.B. K or L16 can be bought for £40 to £60, and nearly all spares for the G.B. L516 will fit either of these machines. Thanks for the new A.C.W. which allows us to forget the H-bomb for a couple of hours!

BIRMINGHAM 22c

W. EVANS.

BACK WINDING 9.5mm.

Sir,—With reference to Centre Sprocket's comments on back-winding 9.5mm. (April), couldn't someone manufacture a charger with two winding cores? After the first exposure the charger could be removed in the dark and re-wound with some sort of detachable key; ten turns could equal 1ft., and there would be no

need to take the charger apart. This need not be a standard fitting but used only on chargers for titles, etc. One final point: is it possible to obtain spare H chargers for loading Gevaert, etc.? I have been told they are in short supply.

BIDDENDEN.

R. F. GILES.

A second winding core, fitted in the top chamber, is undoubtedly invaluable for back-wind. This facility was admirably furnished by the Gevaert link charger, but unfortunately it also increases costs, and since it appeared to be wanted by only a very small minority of 9.5mm. users, the need for economical working triumphed. Only if a sufficient number of 9.5mm. enthusiasts demand it could one reasonably expect to see it back. For spare H chargers, try the A.C.W. classified advertisement columns.

REEL CAPACITY

Sir,—I have been interested in home cinematography for 12 years—since I was nine years old, in fact. I recently gave an 8mm. film show to an audience of about sixty, using a 5ft. x 4ft. screen, and obtained amazing results with my Specto 500, especially with colour films. The only drawback is that this projector is built to take 800ft. or 900ft. which are not available. My shows usually last from two to two-and-a-half hours, and if I had 800ft. reels I could show them in comfort.

I have been a keen reader of A.C.W. since 1949, and I think that without it I would be completely lost.

CLONMEL,
CO. TIPPERARY.

JOHN MORRISEY.

AN 8mm. CAMERA IN SINGAPORE

Sir,—I thought you might be interested to hear about a small amateur cine group here in Singapore. It all started when I was posted here shortly after obtaining my first 8mm. camera. I took a few reels of the journey, and as these were appreciated by the other R.A.F. chaps who came out with me we decided to make a complete film, calling ourselves the Altair Film Unit. I was appointed cameraman, another was elected to do the art work, one of us who owned an exposure meter was made an assistant, and so on. Since then we have made and shown a short (135ft.) on *Maw Par Villa*, a fantastic garden which is crammed with plaster models, grotesque, picturesque, and symbolic. Many of them show Chinese legends with morals. The gardens were built by a millionaire living in Singapore, and are open free to the public. Our 350ft. film now only awaits titling.

Another film is under way, and three more (colour and monochrome) are in the planning stage. The finished films arouse much interest in the billets, and provide the Unit with an interesting off duty occupation. Cameras, equipment and film stock are plentiful in Singapore; the prices are similar to those in the U.K., but processing takes substantially longer—especially for Kodachrome, for which we wait for six weeks or more.

R.A.F. MAINTENANCE BASE,
SELETAR, SINGAPORE 28.

B.M.J. AMBROSE
(S.A.C.).



Looking for a setting for an experimental film? These two pictures of the location Altair F.U. used for their first production, *Maw Par Villa*, show that you might do worse than try Singapore. (See letter in col. 1.)



AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL

Sir,—You could omit the article on professional releases which appears regularly every month. *Amateur Cine World* is for amateurs. The space could be used for Cine Circle reports, etc.

HALTON.

G. COOK.

But has the amateur no interest in, or nothing to learn from, the professional cinema? The many readers we have in the 35mm. professional field do not regard amateur film work as being outside their range of interests.

Sir,—Thank you for a really splendid magazine. I read it from cover to cover. I would like to see articles on trick work in professional films to see how they set about making a film like *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*, for example. Thank you once again for A.C.W. and the best of luck for the future.

COALVILLE, LEICESTER.

K. ROUS.

We shall be pleased to oblige from time to time, but the best film trickery is the kind which you don't recognise as trickery.

A Car and a Camera on the Continent

By
G. B. TAIT



The problem, "When shall I shoot, and when shall I save my film for another occasion?" would never arise were there no need to consider costs. If, for example, one could afford to take £200 worth of Kodachrome on holiday, filming would be reduced to a straightforward principle—shoot everything, every incident, everywhere, at all times; and afterwards, having returned home to the family mansion, get the second butler to throw away the uninteresting and less-than-perfect portions of the accumulated material.

But the financial aspect is very important to me. It is true that the filming I want to discuss was done in Brittany, that I stayed there quite a while, that I took my car with me, that said car is a 2½ litre Jaguar, that my camera is a 16mm. Bell & Howell, and that I even added to the expense of the undertaking by having my wife along. These facts taken together may appear to add up to a picture of sinful wealth, but this appearance is entirely deceptive. The Jaguar, though still a magnificent and ferocious creature, is middle aged—somebody said it looks its best in the dark—and is maintained in serviceable condition only by much tinkering on Sunday mornings. As to the 16mm. Bell & Howell, in a manner of speaking I have had that since it was a second-hand thirty-bob 9.5mm. Pathe with a clockwork motor clamped alongside as an afterthought. The long series of horse-trading episodes that transformed it to its present incarnation would make a story in itself.

Clear Eye, Steady Hand

My wife I have also had for some considerable time. She has been particularly well cared for and in consequence has a calm disposition, clear eye and the steady hand so desirable in a camera operator. When it is a matter of filming she invariably does exactly what her husband orders. Much more useful to have along than a tripod—and better-looking, of course.

We usually begin (round about Christmas time) by agreeing that if money runs a bit short we'd rather choose to shorten the holiday by some days, or even manage without the car, than return without our film record. With this resolution firmly in mind, we can set about buying reels of Kodachrome (wherever we can

find them) with an easy conscience. Of course, when holiday time arrives we inevitably do find ourselves short of the minimum of cash required, but by then we have forgotten our agreement to shorten holiday or do without car. So far we have always filled the financial gap by some unexpected windfall such as a rebate on income tax or the unexpected sale of a rather hopeless and much-travelled manuscript to some frightfully highbrow magazine. On this occasion, at any rate, as a result of lengthy economies augmented by ingenious money-juggling we were able to go to Brittany for three weeks with car and cine camera—and a sufficient quantity of film.

I say a sufficient quantity of film because we are no longer in the class of eager and enthusiastic beginners who are satisfied to return home with about fifty feet of disconnected snippets. What we demand of ourselves is a complete film, with beginning, middle, end, continuity and build-up, or else we might as well leave the camera behind—and I think I have indicated clearly enough that we have very little intention



of doing that. In my opinion a film to these standards—at any rate, a travel film to these standards—cannot be produced on much less than 500ft., assuming that about 80ft. of this will be discarded as unsatisfactory.

One thing more. Some years ago when our private financial tensions happened to be less than usual we tried a film in Kodachrome—just as an experiment, of course—not that we would consider using colour a second time. Inevitably the result of this experiment has been the growth of a conviction that rather than return to monochrome we would shorten our holiday, or even leave the car behind—but I seem to have said something along those lines already . . .

So there we are, ready to go. Three weeks in Brittany ahead. A car, a cine camera, 500ft. of Kodachrome, and no hard-and-fast programme, no hotels booked, go where we like, film what we choose.

Horrible Statistics

At the rate of 2.5 seconds per foot of film 500ft. gives 1,250 shooting seconds, or 20 shooting minutes, and 125 ten-second bursts. On the other hand, we had provided ourselves with about twenty filming days—twenty days in which we would drift around in the car, stop, admire, investigate, walk about, talk to people, eat and drink, in the midst of supremely colourful and filmable surroundings.

Twenty days represents perhaps a hundred shooting hours—it is sometimes dull in Brittany and occasionally it rains. In other words, out of 6,000 minutes available to us, almost every one of them likely to produce some attractive scene or interesting episode or quaint character, we are only able to select twenty—and, of course, we have no chance to turn back the clock or roll back the miles. While we are considering

the statistics of the subject, let me deepen the general gloom by pointing out that on the basis of 125 shots, the average cost of pressing the trigger works out at half-a-crown a time.

Have I succeeded in giving you some impression of the veritable agonies of indecision one might suffer? Those debates we had! Shall we shoot this now (this is wonderful though the light isn't too good)? Or shall we save the film for some other incident that we may encounter tomorrow—but of course it may pour with rain tomorrow?

Not an Insoluble Problem

One might be inclined to think that there is no answer to this kind of problem. Since you don't know where you will go or what you will meet or what the weather will be like, and since you have on hand film material for only twenty minutes, it appears impossible to do any sort of advance planning. But this isn't so. In the first place, the film must have a beginning and it is fairly clear what the beginning must do: it must introduce the *dramatis personae*—yourself, your wife and your car—and explain what you are going to do—namely, tour France.

Since the beginning can sometimes be made before the actual holiday commences, there is a considerable risk that it will receive just a little too much tender thought and care and too large a footage of film. Some years ago I made a similar film of a car journey abroad in which I dealt so lovingly with the preparatory work on the car, adjusting carburettor, flushing radiator, screwing on of G.B. plate, that audiences mistake it for an instructional film on motor-car maintenance.

Make It Snappy!

At other times I have tried introductions consisting of toy clockwork motors moving across maps (never successful—the models always scamper like terrified mice). I have had fingers tracing routes across maps (the audience never manages to read the place-names) and double-exposures showing the car moving across a background of map (too successful; the audience, overcome with admiration, abandons interest in the film and demands to be told how I contrived the trick). The general principle which has emerged from these attempts is that the beginning should be as brief and as simple as possible. Get yourself to France as quickly as you can.

With this film I opened with the car at rest outside our house. Wife gets in; self gets in; car moves off with a very satisfactory heave and slow roll, and turning its back on the camera as it gathers speed, exhibits a G.B. plate posted prominently on its posterior. (Do I have to explain that wife re-emerged from car after the camera had been stopped—but surely everyone knows that trick?)

The next shot was made at Dover. There are a number of good episodes to be had there at any time: driving up to the Customs sheds; Customs officials poking into the boot. The



most effective one is the snatching aloft of the whole car by a gigantic crane. This shot cannot be taken by the driver, for the stevedores push slings under the wheels and have the car rising off the ground almost before he has stepped out of it. To get this shot the non-driver member of the party must be stationed in position, camera at the ready, eye at viewfinder as the car is moved up into position.

My shot of the Jaguar soaring aloft, silhouetted against the sky and finally lowered into the hold, is one of the most satisfactory I have ever taken. After that, a few orthodox shots; blasé stevedore unhitches hawser from bollard and drops it over the edge; gap widens between ship and quay, showing churning water. Then, without more ado, a glimpse of the car being deposited on a French quayside. Include French-looking worker or gendarme; driver steps in; car moves off.

Thus I achieved an introduction to the personnel of our expedition and explained its arrival on the Continent. But already as we rattle and bounce along the streets of Boulogne we are being presented with filmable incidents—gendarmes conducting traffic with white batons, odd-looking motor-cars, colourful characters on colourful bicycles; but of course, we now have an agreed and consolidated filming policy.

Must Have a Theme

First of all, even a travel film must have a unifying theme or story or motive, even if this is only a very slight one. It must not show merely a collection of unconnected scenes, however interesting. Incidents must be linked together, and not in any merely static manner, but in such a way that the whole film seems to move forward—as if something were being attempted and accomplished by someone.

We made the car our continuity link. The car was introduced at the start. It featured prominently in the loading procedure at Dover. It was the car that took us places, merely a glimpse of it explained our being where we were observed to be, and it was the means of indicating when we moved off elsewhere. A suitable title for the film (which we didn't use because we'd had a very similar one on a previous film) might have been: "Jaguar goes to France."

A thorough consideration of this idea leads one to see that in the body of the film there must be about four kinds of incident in which the car will feature. First, the car going places;

secondly, arriving; thirdly, leaving; and finally, waiting attentively in the background while owners admire or visit or inspect or talk to friends.

Choosing the Jaguar as principal character was an excellent piece of casting. Though battered it is immensely photogenic. Its lines are such that even at rest it seems to be doing about seventy miles an hour. When it is driven in slow time off the road on to the grass verge, it does so with a smooth and effortless roll that is a pleasure to see.

Unexpected Drama

On a stretch of road that was sufficiently smooth and picturesque I shot a considerable chunk of film from the moving car. This is something I have attempted several times, with varying success. On one occasion I set camera on tripod in the back of the car and ordered my wife to touch the button as soon as the car was moving smoothly in top gear. I then tried to add a little drama by taking a sharp corner at speed.

Both wife and tripod tipped over and I became the owner of a considerable footage depicting the upholstery of the back of my car. At another time I constructed an elaborate camera bracket for clamping to the fascia board. Unfortunately, although it appeared robust enough, the camera vibrated badly.

Our best attempts at this sort of shot have been achieved by my wife with elbows wedged on to knees, the lens just looking over the top of the car bonnet. This arrangement has as much firmness as a tripod, and perhaps greater cushioning effect, and was employed in the present case. The car should be moving steadily at a minimum top speed, say twenty miles an hour, and if lighting conditions permit, it is worth while to double the film speed to smooth out any unsteadiness. As I was using Kodachrome in a tree-shaded road, I was unable to do this.

Effective Touch

The resulting film showed (towards bottom left) a section of bonnet, two massive headlamps, and a yellow Scottish pennant fluttering effectively from our radiator cap. Beyond, a smoothly flowing strip of road lined with tall trees and dappled with sunshine and shadow. A very effective touch was added by a big white French car coming towards us at terrific speed on our left. This long shot was unscrupulously chopped up and the portions used throughout the film as continuity links.

In making this film we were trying to capture a little bit of France to take home to show our friends, and for our own private pleasure, so it was clear that we ourselves must not obtrude. Nevertheless, we felt entitled to provide a glimpse of our way of living on tour. Thus an idyllic little scene as follows: car drives off road into sunny lane; medium shot of picnic basket; wife making tea, car in background;

LETTERS TO A BEGINNER

Next month, in response to many requests, we publish the first of a very helpful and really practical new series for the beginner. It has been specially designed for the man who wants to know all about the technical side but does not want little drawings showing how light passes through lenses—the man who wants to know how cine equipment works and how to get the best out of it, who is not particularly interested in film art but wants to make good personal movies; in short, the beginner who would hate to be blinded by science or art but asks to be treated as an intelligent being who can make worthwhile pictures if he is clearly shown how. Look out for the first article next month!



C.U. showing contents of basket—a fine fruit-piece containing oranges, apples, bananas, cheese and assorted coloured packages; mid-shot in gorgeous Kodachrome of author, splendidly bronzed, biting into a luscious hard-boiled egg. The setting was unidentifiable, so this scene could be put anywhere.

This much was done at the very start of our tour. Taking into account the conclusion which, of course, we had planned but which (another glimpse of the blindingly obvious) could not be filmed till the end, we had the frame-work of a coherent film, into which almost any sort of properly filmed scenic stuff could be fitted.

Perhaps I should emphasise that although I have devoted a good deal of time to a discussion of these introductory and continuity shots, they should be made as brief as possible. If the film by its title claims to be a film of France, it should on no account turn out to be chiefly a film of how to stow luggage into a car, or of how to get from Manchester to Dover, or even of the technicalities of loading vehicles on to boats, filmable though such technicalities often are. Above all, it should not show too much of *us*. We must not obtrude. We are magnificent, but we are not France.

Pause for Reflection

Having thus secured our film framework, we decided to hold our hand a while and study the possibilities of the situation, and in actual fact we did no more filming for a number of days. With France and its scenery and its people right there in front of us, we considered what sort of shots we would like to take home with us. We remarked from time to time (but without reaching for the camera) that this or that would be effective—or would be unsatisfactory without a lot of explanatory material.

This interval for reflection was very valuable. We realised the danger of accumulating an

unsatisfactory collection of brief disconnected snippets: traffic policemen in Rouen—barge on the Seine—glimpse of Mont St. Michel—shot of war-damaged village—man fishing in river (there is always a man to be seen fishing in French rivers)—that sort of thing. Any audience would be rendered breathless merely by watching it.

The converse of this idea is that we should wait till we came across a really satisfactory scene or situation and film it completely, regardless of cost, as it were. We should take long shots so that the completed film would have a leisurely rhythm; it must appear that we went to France and stood still and observed and contemplated and breathed in the atmosphere.

No Picture Post Cards

We had another idea, which I find even more difficult to put across, but it is to some extent expressed in the phrase "Scenes with People"! One can to a considerable extent bring home the scenery of France on a set of picture post-cards, but to my mind the scenery is not France unless it has French people superimposed upon it doing French things in a French sort of way...

Anyway, we tried this notion out first of all at Mont St. Michel. I began with a brief shot of the Mount, car low in foreground. After that we went inside. It was Sunday, and the place was crowded with people. I took a rising shot up the battlements to the steeple; down again to a mid shot of colourful family (father in shirt and braces) talking some matter over with the aid of five vigorous pairs of hands; more shots of battlements; sweet young French miss in white lace dress and short red jacket trips innocently down the stone stairway, walking as much like a film-star as she can; shot over battlements, down on to sands and outward to a rock; young couple, girl in red dress, sitting there; telephoto shot discloses them

I Filmed a Wedding

By CENTRE SPROCKET

After spending some hours editing my version of a wedding film, I feel rather pleased with the result. Arnold and I joined forces for the occasion as his brother was the bridegroom. Subsequently we had all the films duplicated so that we could each make use of the other's material. Reversal duplicates should be projected with the emulsion away from the lens. So to avoid focusing troubles during projection, we agreed that Arnold should keep all the originals and I should rely on the duplicates. That meant I had to produce titles with the emulsion on the "wrong" side to match the picture "dupes". How?

Of course, I could have taken them normally and had duplicates made, but this is an extravagant process. Alternatively, I could have used negative/positive technique, but I did not relish the complications. Much simpler, I thought, would be the dodge of filming the titles in a mirror so that the original film would appear normal when threaded "emulsion away".

Back to Front

Fortunately I remembered that, with an ordinary mirror, double reflections would probably mar the effect. So finally I got a better result much more simply by setting up the title mirror-wise. This is simply done if you use punched-out white felt letters. But, like me, you should view the result carefully in a mirror to check you have got the right balance in the layout. It is almost impossible to get a good balance in any other way. The mirror may also bring to light some "jabberwocky" spelling errors arising from this looking - glass technique.

Before the day of the wedding, Arnold and I got together to decide how we were going to tackle the camera work. When I was working with a friend some time ago, we agreed to use the same aperture in the hopes of getting matched results. Things did not pan out that

way, however, for we found our exposures so different that we could not very well inter-cut our shots.

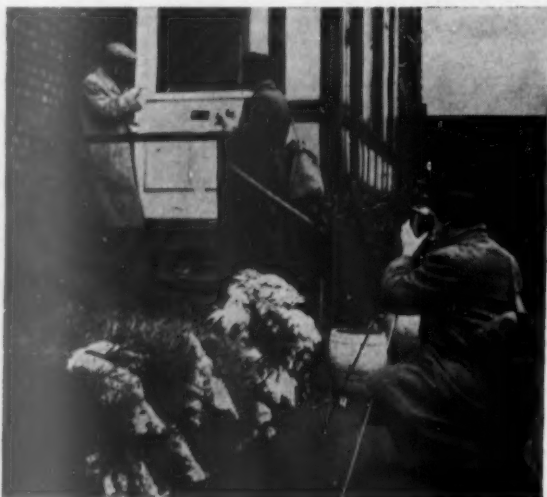
We had, of course, forgotten that our cameras were of different types, their shutters gave different exposure times, and the different lens designs did not transmit the same amount of light at the same aperture. In addition, the aperture markings were probably not quite accurate—you will understand why if you look at your lens when it is set to $f/14$. Perhaps the chief reason for the exposure difference lay in a difference in the speeds of our cameras.

Easy Way Out

Arnold and I did not want to fall into the same trap. We could, I suppose, have checked up on all the variables and then have decided what exposure difference should be allowed to provide the necessary correction. On comparing our earlier films, however, we found that we both expose our stock to produce much the same photographic quality. On the strength of this, we decided to assess our own exposures independently. I am glad to say we have not been disappointed in the results.

Our next job was to work out a general plan of campaign. Arnold uses a Dekko with an $f/1.9$ lens in a focusing mount. My Pathe H has only an $f/2.5$ fixed-focus lens. Had the weather proved dull, I might not have been able to fully expose SS Pan on close-ups in the church porch. With that extra fraction of a stop available, Arnold would be better placed for the job. In any case, his lens would focus for the close-ups and mine would not.

We decided, therefore, that Arnold should stand near the church door while I worked from just inside the churchyard. By shooting over



Postmen and newspaper boys seem to be the amateur's delight. Let's hope Ray A.C.G., here seen shooting just such a sequence for their current 9.5mm. production, are giving a new twist to this old cinematic cliché.

Junior Productions A.F.U. are another enthusiastic 9.5mm. club. While extras stand by in the background, the cameramen lines up with his f/1.9 Dekko for a shot of the villain of the current production, Little Do They Know.

the low wall, I could film the guests arriving and entering the lychgate. As soon as they were obscured from view, I stopped shooting, knowing that Arnold's complementary shot would show them walking through the gate and up the path. It was my job also to take close-ups of the church clock for use as continuity links. Close-ups of car wheels stopping and starting and car doors opening and closing were also my preserve. Arnold, on the other hand, was responsible for getting close-ups of guests chatting in the church doorway.

One of the high spots of any wedding film is the arrival of the bride. We decided to "stretch" this deliberately by repeating a little of the action at each change of camera position. Also, to provide variety, we would each shoot the procession to the door from two angles. As with the guests, I had to cover the action as far as the lychgate. Arnold, meanwhile, sprinted down the path to get a mid-shot of the bride and her father as they came through the gate.

While he was taking this, I retired towards the church door to get a long shot which I held until the bride was in medium close-up. I did not attempt to "pull focus" and the slight softness in the close-up is quite flattering! Arnold rounded things off with a final shot of the bride and her father disappearing through the church doorway.

Cinematic High-Spot

We took these shots from opposite sides of the path. In this way, the change of camera angle was sufficient to eliminate the effect of a sudden jump backwards or forwards from one shot to another. By changing camera angle in this manner, however, we ran a risk of producing a "hither and thither" effect, with the bride walking alternately to right and to left in successive shots. We got round this by starting each new shot nearly head-on and cutting before it became broadside on.

The real cinematic high-spot was, of course, the appearance of the bride and groom on the church steps after the ceremony. We covered this easily enough, starting our cameras on the dark doorway just before the couple walked out. A little more difficult was the coverage of the inevitable family groups. Tableaux are scarcely good cinema, yet something of the sort was expected from us. We compromised by showing people getting into position and then taking close-ups of the press photographer in action. In this way all parties were pleased: a further tribute to a golden rule of cinematography, *show people really doing something!*



9.5mm. Colour

If you have been using 9.5mm. Kodachrome you will probably know by now that the price has been reduced. The H and P chargers now cost 25s. 4d. each and the Webó 50ft. magazines 41s. 11d. This is really welcome news, for while 9.5mm. colour film costs appreciably more than 16mm., few of us could afford to use a lot of it. Monochrome stock in 9.5mm. costs a good deal less than 16mm. All the 9.5mm. Kodachrome has to be processed in Paris, however, and so special arrangements are needed with the Customs people. In turn, this involves a lot of paper work and extra handling and so the price goes up.

Strangely enough, the position has been no better on the other side of the Channel. In France, as in England, Kodachrome has cost more in 9.5mm. than in 16mm. Early this year it was announced that from 1st March the price in France would be "substantially reduced" so that, in the words of the journal, *Cine Amateur*, "the flagrant disproportion (of prices) to the detriment of 9.5mm. will be removed." This, you will observe, does not imply that 9.5mm. Kodachrome is now cheaper than 16mm.—only that it is no dearer.

Roughly speaking, the same applies in this country, too. A 50ft. spool of 16mm. Kodachrome costs 41s. 10d., a 50ft. magazine of 9.5mm., 41s. 11d. You can, of course, argue that a 50ft. 16mm. magazine costs 49s. 8d. On the other hand, 50ft. of 16mm. costs only 36s. 5d. if you use 100ft. spools.

To be in proportion to the monochrome prices, 9.5mm. Kodachrome would have to sell at only 29s. for a Webó magazine, or 16s. for an H charger. This desirable state of affairs still seems a long way off. The present price adjustment is nonetheless most welcome. And we can but hope that it leads to an increased demand sufficient to justify further reductions later on!



Gadget Corner

By

HARRY WALDEN

A REWINDER BRAKE

It is easy, of course, to keep a light hand on the emptying reel while it is being re-wound, but a brake is smoother in action and kinder to the fingers. The brake illustrated consists merely of an old spring belt running over the spindle to give a certain amount of tension. If more tension is wanted I merely pull the spring with a finger. I intend one day to drill through the bearing to the spindle and use a small spiral spring from a petrol lighter to press a bolt against the spindle. But while the spring belt serves so well it seems that that gadget will remain unmade.

EDITING WITH ENVELOPES

Although I have been using this simple idea for twenty years, I hesitated to refer to it here until I found that it met with marked approval when I demonstrated it to a club recently. For editing I have a set of strong foolscap envelopes (i.e., about 9 in. x 4 in.), with the flaps on the short ends. Six or a dozen of them are laid out in a row across the table in front of me, an inch or so apart from one another with the flaps on the far side. I leave sufficient space between myself and the envelopes to allow for the rewinder and viewer on the table.

As the film is broken down into its separate shots, each length is laid in a curl on its appropriate envelope. As each envelope is brought into use a brief note of the subject—usually just one word—is written in pencil in capitals on the near edge. More envelopes are added as needed, and the others are re-arranged to keep them in the required order, always from left to right. If necessary, a second row of envelopes is started. Usually I break down the shots to sequences and then arrange each sequence at a time in final order. At this stage the use of too many envelopes can be avoided by using three positions on each envelope: front, middle and back, in that order.

Domestic Harmony Preserved

Apart from its flexibility, this method has the great advantage that when the domestic authorities announce that the table is required for its proper purpose, the coils of film can be wound up and slipped into their envelopes, already labelled, for use next time. When there is a lot of film on one envelope, it is easiest to find the end of each separate piece of film, put all the ends together and, in one go, carefully

curl them round two or three fingers into one roll, small enough to slip into the envelope. Where three shots have already been laid out in order, the nearest piece goes outside the roll and the furthest inside.

The flap-ends of all the envelopes are then fastened together with a spring clip, so that one gets a thick fan of them. The film is thus safe from dust and can be left out if need be. When editing is completed, the three dozen or so empty envelopes are slipped into the box of editing materials for use next time—they take up little space—when the written descriptions can be crossed out, erased or covered with pieces of gum-strip.

TITLE LETTERS

One of the charms of cine in these days when everything is pumped at you is that you can still do most of the jobs yourself. Don't despair if you cannot do lettering. Neither could I. The following is rather laborious, but is useful because you can make mistakes without completely spoiling your work.

The titles are first drawn in pencil on thin typewriting paper of the required size. The paper is fixed with drawing pins to the drawing board, a T-square being used to check that the top edge is level. Horizontal guide lines for the letters are drawn with this T-square, and with the aid of a set square slid along the T-square a number of little upright lines are drawn as guides to keep the lettering upright. I have on occasion drawn nearly the whole of the lettering with ruler and compass. If the lettering or the spacing is not to your liking, rub out the pencil, and start again. It is a wise precaution to set out your spacing first and get that right to start with.

Patience Rather than Skill

Now make a piece of "carbon" paper from thin typewriting paper by rubbing all over the surface with a piece of green drawing chalk. This "carbon" paper, with the pencil drawing on top and the final title card below, are lined up along the top edge and together pinned to the drawing board. The outlines of the lettering are then traced with a hard point. With the green lines thus produced as a guide, the letters are then filled in with white poster paint, using a sable brush. This is more a matter of care and patience than of any inborn skill. When dry, any remaining chalk lines will come off easily with a soft rubber.

One thing that can be done with certainty is to see that the wording is centrally spaced. There is no need to re-draw your rough if it is not properly centred as it can be corrected by off-setting the rough above the title card when tracing. The following method for finding centre avoids measurement. Tear a strip of paper, say from the edge of a newspaper, of a length equal to the width of the title card. From one end of it mark off the width of the lettering and tear off the excess. Fold the excess in half and this will give the distance between the lettering and the edge of the card on both sides.



Crawley F.U. at work on *Two Friends*. Left and below: the two men make their way towards their favourite fishing spot—and the Prussian lines. Below: the assistant cameraman and continuity girl prepare for a shot.

A French Village in Surrey



The length of the Ten Best programme is such that three films had to be omitted. Crawley Film Unit's *Two Friends* is, unhappily, one of them, but we hope this description of its production will give some idea of the problems encountered in adapting de Maupassant's short story, and the way in which they were tackled.

By
G. ALEXANDER
HOWE

Some years ago that friend of every amateur cinematographer, Adrian Brunel, suggested to me that I might find some suitable material for filming in Guy de Maupassant's short stories. Following his advice, I read all the de Maupassant I could find, and eventually my choice fell on *Two Friends*. The plot is briefly as follows:

The Paris of 1871 is under siege to the Prussian guns. M. Morrisot and M. Sauvage meet by chance in a cafe, their first meeting since the war began. They sit drinking and reminiscing of the days that are gone, the days when they fished in the Seine. Becoming a little the worse for liquor, Sauvage suggests that they go fishing once more in their old haunt, which is now beyond the French outposts. Morrisot agrees, and together they visit Colonel Dumolin with the object of obtaining a pass through the French lines. Dumolin tries to dissuade them, pointing out the close proximity of the Prussians to their fishing ground. However, they finally persuade him and he reluctantly issues the pass.



Three frame enlargements from *Two Friends*. M. Morrisot waits for the Colonel's reply to his request for a pass through the French lines to go fishing.



Sauvage and Morrisot meet. Wine begins to flow—but soon the bottle isn't being quite so neatly poured into the two glasses.



The Prussian officer prepares to give the order to fire. Close-ups like these give an intensity to Crawley F.U.'s production.



On reaching the river, they start to fish contentedly, believing that they have been unobserved; but in fact a Prussian look-out has seen them and a patrol is already crossing the river. Morrisot and Sauvage are captured and taken before the Prussian Commander who, knowing that they must have the password in order to return through the French lines, threatens to shoot them as spies unless they divulge it. Both men stubbornly refuse and are executed. The Commander has their catch for supper.

Research on the Franco-Prussian war took many months, during which time I visited museums and waded through masses of prints, photographs and books. The problems were many. In the first place, there was no film production unit in Crawley! However, a few members of the Film Society were keen to make a film, and so Crawley Film Unit was born.

The next problem was to find suitable costumes. Fortunately there is a vigorous Drama Group in the town from which we drew most of our cast, and they had a wealth of costumes of about the period we required. But there were no French or Prussian military uniforms. The only approach to uniforms that we were able to muster were three pairs of postmen's trousers, a town band tunic lavishly decorated with gold braid, a 1914-18 British Army uniform, a German grey spiked helmet of the same period and four British Army great-coats (1939-1945), dyed navy blue. A friend undertook the task of fashioning the familiar round Prussian caps, getting the material from

cast-off Post Office uniforms. Painted buttons were sewn on to represent badges.

With the addition of white webbing, buckles, blazer buttons, an odd pair of epaulets and various flashes, we were able to transform the bits and pieces into some semblance of both Prussian and French uniforms, according to the requirements of the day's shooting. The total outlay for all this ran into only a few shillings for the webbing, buckles and buttons.

Wellingtons as Jack-Boots

Important additions to the Prussian uniforms were several pairs of polished wellingtons, which we found passed admirably for jack-boots. For a Prussian uniform in long shot we were able to use the British Army *khaki* uniform (which photographed grey), together with the spiked German helmet and a pair of "jack-boots".

The town band tunic did service for quite a number of shots. When worn by a low ranking French officer, the ornate braiding on the collar was covered up. For Colonel Dumolin it was uncovered and epaulets added. For a Prussian private it received a black collar with red flashes, and we took care to see that the braided cuffs were not in the frame. Genuine Prussian needle-rifles were hired for as little as we would have spent on making dummies. The problem of transport for cast and equipment was settled by a friend who willingly loaned his large shooting brake, and we also had the use of a car owned by "M. Sauvage".

Our equipment included two Ensign Kinecams, one ex-R.A.F. tripod and a Weston exposure meter. For lighting we used a stand of three photofloods, two 500 watt Panorama lamps and a 500 watt spotlight. Film stock decided upon was Gevapan 26 reversal, chosen for its good speed and fine grain. We used it on both interior and exterior locations.

Useful Location

Perhaps the most interesting sequence to film took place at the Prussian camp. The spot chosen for this was the dilapidated manor of Buckswood Grange in Crawley; it is flanked by several outhouses and has a cobbled forecourt surrounded by trees. It also has a high brick wall which proved very useful—as you will see later. The Manor we used as a French chateau for an early sequence, and the outhouses were just what we wanted for the Prussian H.Q.

The Prussian camp sequence opens with a shot of a flag flying in the breeze. We made it from red, white and blue bunting with a Prussian eagle cut from tracing paper and pasted on. The flag was attached to a cane and supported on a pedestal ashtray and the flutter was produced with the aid of a vacuum cleaner with the bag removed. The red, white and blue photographed as the black, yellow and red of the Prussian standard.

The following shot is a general view of the camp. The grouping of figures and properties was carefully planned to lead the eye to the central figure of the Prussian officer who was to



"Fire!" The Prussian officer raps out the command in an almost overpowering big close shot.

make his entrance from an outhouse door in the top left-hand corner of the frame. This door was in deep shadow. About six feet to the right of it I placed a sentry whose white webbing belt showed up well, through the shadows. On the left, in mid foreground, a soldier in "fatigues" (postman's trousers, shirt, Prussian cap and "jack-boots") sits cleaning his rifle, the muzzle of which points in the direction of the action. To give the scene a feeling of busyness, another extra in "fatigues" walks across the foreground carrying buckets. And further to help suggest the military atmosphere, three rifles are placed in a pyramid in the centre of the frame.

Correct Drill

The officer makes his entrance from the outhouse, smoking a large white pipe which effectively picks him out from the deep shadow. The sentry presents arms in true Prussian fashion, having been instructed—as were the rest of the "Prussian" extras—by an ex-member of the German armed forces. The officer returns the salute and moves forward to a patch of sunlight in the centre of the frame. Simultaneously, a messenger, wearing the khaki uniform, spiked helmet and "jack-boots", enters the frame from the right, salutes and presents the officer with a paper.

All this movement was timed and rehearsed to ensure that there was no break at all in the action, thus serving to create the impression of a busy camp—a camp which, in cold fact, was very sparsely populated. In the next shot, the two friends are marched across the courtyard and halted before the officer. Their bag of fish is deposited on the ground. We then see the



A Prussian look-out spots Sauvage and Morrisot peacefully fishing. A tense sequence begins as the Prussians stalk the two Frenchmen.

officer in close shot; behind him stands the sentry.

The Prussian regards the two friends rather quizzically and enquires pleasantly (sub-title): "Well, gentlemen, did you have good sport?" The prisoners lower their eyes and do not answer. Cut back to the officer. "In order to return through the French lines," he says smoothly, "you must have the pass-word. Give me that pass-word or be shot". Then we get a big close shot of his mouth as he raps out "—AS SPIES", the words of the sub-title rapidly advancing towards the camera.

The series of shots which follow depicts the reaction of the friends to his threat. The officer watches them closely for any signs of weakening, but they lower their heads in stubborn silence; he shouts an order and they are marched away. We see the jack-boots of the firing party as they run across the cobbles. Cut to a close shot of the pyramid of rifles being grabbed. Cut to a long shot of the high wall I mentioned earlier. The escort march the prisoners to the wall and stand them up against it.

The next shot was to be of the firing party moving into position, and I felt that if this was to have its full effect, at least six men would need to be shown. Well, we had the men—but not the uniforms. However, we did have sufficient caps, wellington boots and rifles, so wearing their everyday lounge suits, they put on boots and caps and to each we gave a rifle. Then we photographed only their shadows on the ground. This subterfuge produced quite a dramatic effect; indeed, the scene is probably more expressive than it would have been had

(Continued on page 198)



"What'll we do if we are caught by the Prussians?" "We'll offer them a plate of fish to fry," replies Sauvage cheerfully.



The two friends shake hands for the last time, with their backs to the wall against which they are about to be shot.



Sauvage tries to convince the Colonel that his fishing trip with Sauvage is not so foolhardy as it appears.



Calamity Jane swept through cinemas a few weeks ago as briskly as the crack of a whip. This production still shows the unit preparing for a tracking shot.

Letting It Rip

AT YOUR CINEMA
By DEREK HILL

Why is gusto such a stranger to the screen? Professionals and amateurs alike seem strangely shy of letting rip with a really full-blooded approach to their subjects. Vitality is a youthful virtue, which makes it all the more peculiar that young cine enthusiasts tend towards stories of gloom and despair. Audiences delight in exuberance; the distributors of *Doctor in the House* tell me that the film has smashed box-office records established by *The Robe* at the Odeon, Leicester Square. And *Doctor in the House* isn't in CinemaScope or 3-D—it simply happens to be a good film.

This light-hearted Technicolour comedy concerns the experiences of four medical students, played by Dirk Bogarde, Donald Sinden, Donald Houston, and the ever-ebullient Kenneth More. The first half of the film is undoubtedly Mr. More's; but the entry of James Robertson Justice as a fiery surgeon, who can quail even these students with a few well-chosen words, challenges his domination. These two actors perform with a zest as rare as it is welcome.

Don't expect much original humour from the film; most of the situations are familiar. Its success is principally due to its cracking pace, the result of unusually economic treatment.

Gag follows gag with such speed that it is easy to overlook the reliance on verbal wisecracks, and director Ralph Thomas has seen to it that none of the jokes is held too long. One sequence, for example, shows Dirk Bogarde on a bus with a newly bought skeleton wrapped in paper. He sits next to a woman whose newspaper's headlines announce the discovery of more bones of a murderer's victim. When the bundle bursts open, the scene immediately dissolves into the next sequence. Here is restraint, indeed! The rapidity and economy of this treatment improve the effect immeasurably whereas a long-winded scene of accusations and explanations would have fatally weakened it. How many of us amateurs spare our audiences the obvious sequel to every situation? Perhaps we don't do so as often as we should because leaving things to their imagination entails giving them something imaginative to work on!

By having four more or less equally central characters, *Doctor in the House* solves its continuity problems almost effortlessly. Cutting from the activities of one student to another avoids the difficulties of suggesting passing time—but there are dangers in this easy way out. A sequence in which Donald Sinden proposes to every nurse in the hospital is cross-cut with Dirk Bogarde's first maternity case. The cross-cutting goes on for so long that the humour of the proposal joke is almost lost and the pathos

of the maternity sequence seriously weakened.

If ever a film deserved the maximum in gusto, it is George Marshall's *Red Garters*, the first film shot for wide screen proportions. Despite its admirable basic idea—an affectionate guying of the traditional Western—the film can only be regarded as an honourable failure. The nervousness with which the producers regarded the experiment is shown by a peculiar opening title which assures us that the film is meant to be funny. The principal novelty of the film is its stylised Technicolor settings. Buildings are represented by skeleton frameworks against earth and sky of a bright canary yellow.

Indoor Western

Unfortunately the production looks as if it was shot on a very limited budget. Only two sound stages were used (this must be the first indoor Western), with the result that the settings soon become over-familiar. Two vigorous dance numbers are staged against the same background, and the impact of the second is thus considerably reduced. Moreover, the comparative seriousness with which the plot is taken does not harmonise with the gay humour of the sets; though there are more than a dozen songs and dances, they seem to take second place to the story. (Had the plot been treated as flippantly as that of the stage show, *The Boy Friend*, which guys the musicals of the twenties as this film attempts to guy the popular Western, how much more successful it would have been!)

Nevertheless, *Red Garters* is definitely a film to be seen. The amusing economy of its sets should prompt ideas for similar methods of suggesting backgrounds which we might find very useful for our own productions. Rosemary Clooney, Jack Carson, Guy Mitchell and Gene Barry give pleasant performances, and the songs are delightful. There are several happy touches in the treatment, too, not least of which is a sudden exaggerated blast of "hurry-hurry" music every time a shot of the militia riding to the rescue appears. In short, *Red Garters* remains one of those unsatisfactory "if only" films. If only it had been given the vigour that we recently saw in *Calamity Jane*... If only some of the high spirits shown by Doris Day in that film could have infected all concerned with

the production of *Red Garters*... If only the director had kicked over all the traces instead of just a few...

David Lean has had more than enough "if onlys" murmured over his work since his brilliant *Great Expectations*. Unfortunately, *Hobson's Choice* doesn't represent a return to the level of that achievement. The story, based on Harold Brighouse's well-known comedy, concerns the marriage of the eldest daughter of a prosperous Lancashire bootmaker, (Charles Laughton) to her father's boothand (John Mills). There is plenty of humour in the film and an abundance of the craftsmanship we have come to expect from the director. Yet the general impression remains one of uneasiness.



Above: two scenes from Ralph Thomas's *Doctor in the House*. Top: when you see the film, notice the difference between the shot and this publicity still. The shot presents the situation through action; the still is dramatically composed to give an immediate impact. Below: exuberance at a Rugby match; Kenneth More (standing) and James Robertson Justice (bearded) give their team vigorous vocal support. Left: more exuberance — Doris Day turns up again in *Calamity Jane*.



Why? What went wrong?

Certainly it wasn't the superlative performance of Brenda de Banzie as the daughter. And John Mills is, as usual, a pleasure to watch, even though the pleasure is derived from watching an intelligent actor rather than a perfect characterisation. Nor is Charles Laughton's example of youthful vitality degenerated into a middle-aged heartiness solely responsible for the film's awkwardness.

The trouble seems to lie in the sequence-by-



A study of a craftsman bootmaker (John Mills)—by a craftsman film-maker. Almost every scene in Hobson's Choice shows David Lean's attention to detail. Wilfrid Shingleton's art direction assists him admirably.

sequence technique of the film's construction. Few scenes lead on naturally to the next. The film seems to stop now and again so that a sequence showing the virtuosity of the director or an actor can be cut in. One isolated sequence shows Charles Laughton, drunk, chasing the moon's reflection from puddle to puddle. Later a quite alarming—and completely out of place—scene shows the frightful creatures that haunt his dipsomaniac hallucinations. Every scene appears to be staged separately; the result is rather like a series of revue sketches—and in Charles Laughton's case, music-hall turns—which only incidentally advance the story. This is particularly borne out by the film's totally unexpected cessation. I defy anyone to anticipate the closing credits' crawl up the screen.

Still Trying

Group 3 has been applauded for so long for the promise its productions have shown that it seems high time we saw some real achievements. *Conflict of Wings*, directed by John Eldridge, is yet another near miss—and not so near as most of the unit's past productions, either. The theme is stated rather clumsily in the title and quite simply in the two opening shots before the credits. A flock of birds swoop across a stretch of water, and a jet whistles overhead.

An assorted bunch of Norfolk villagers are attempting to prevent the R.A.F. from using a revered, though not officially recognised, bird sanctuary as a rocket firing range. The climax

comes when the villagers stand on the range to prevent the planes firing—but they have accidentally severed a telephone line to the control tower, and the low clouds almost obscure the pilot's vision.

This is undoubtedly an exciting sequence—but much of its force is lost by the fact that the villagers' reasons for defending the land look too much like a combination of superstition, pigheadedness and sheer stupidity. The R.A.F. types are authentically presented, their reasons for wanting the area are made clear, and their actions throughout seem sane and civilised. On the other hand the villagers are caricatures rather than characters, their story of the land being a hallowed burial ground for the interment of the Roman children (whose souls now inhabit the local bird life) is merely exasperating, and their behaviour appears childish and illogical.

Muddled Approach

Hence, all sympathy for their viewpoint (which less trivial reasons could have justified) is lost, and the drama of the situation is reduced to a storm-in-a-teacup level—especially as there is a surprising lack of incident until the final sequences. The closing scenes show the results of this muddled approach all too clearly. An officer tells the villagers that their actions have delayed the use of the district for at least a year for inquiries to be made. Meanwhile the R.A.F. will move on to another range—and yet another unit will be held up in their training for Malaya.

"There's no end to it, is there?" he asks them quietly. He looks around; the villagers hang their heads, apparently feeling properly ashamed of themselves. The end? Regrettably, no. The last scene shows John Gregson (R.A.F.) embracing Murial Pavlow (village), and the pair agree, "Yes, we were both right"—a preposterous and quite infuriating conclusion.

There is a startling cut in the middle of *Conflict of Wings*. An idyllic love scene on a beach in the excellent Eastman colour in which the film was shot, suddenly changes to a monochrome rocket attack from the air, which turns out to be part of a training film being shown to the aircrews. Good technique? I don't think so. Though undoubtedly it jerks one into sudden attention, it is completely pointless. And the monochrome shots continue so long before their purpose is revealed that they become merely annoying.

The Long, Long Trailer might have been an American Genevieve. The difficulties of towing this glittering monster certainly upset the honeymoon bliss of Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz as much as any old crock could; but the directorial touch isn't light enough. The film, like the trailer, isn't always under control.



Director at work. David Lean (left) prepares for a crane shot high above the studio floor for *Hobson's Choice*. Production stills like this—though they make us sigh enviously at the professional's equipment—should inspire a few thanks that we don't suffer the interminable problems and complications which beset every studio. How much easier it is for amateurs to give a film a personal style—and how much rarer?



Lack of incident is not so pronounced in Vincent Minnelli's comedy *The Long, Long Trailer* (shot in Ansco-colour, print by Technicolor, but it is the principal reason why the film is not as funny as it might have been. The Englishman's amusement at his own affection for the old was delightfully demonstrated in *Genevieve*; and the American's ardent love for the new could be an equally rewarding subject for comedy. Undoubtedly this story of a honeymoon couple's trouble with a monstrous caravan has its moments of fun. Desi Arnaz's first drive with the huge trailer under the instruction of a fierce mechanic is very enjoyable; and there is an unusual but successful mixture of comedy and excitement in a hazardous drive up a mountain when the couple, trying to keep their minds from the danger, attempt a monosyllabic conversation about a complicated film they have seen.

But the laughs are too far apart. Most of the situations are obvious a long way off and are mercilessly ridden to death when they do appear. And though I make no claim to olde worlde chivalry I am always uneasy at the

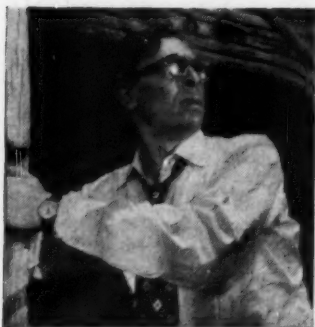
spectacle of girls involved in violent slapstick. Lucille Ball covered in flour rolling around the floor of the jolting caravan in a painfully long sequence seemed less of a funny sight than a sorry one to me.

Watch out at your nearest specialist cinema for a gay and colourful Czechoslovakian comedy called *The Emperor's Baker*. It comes from the other side of the Curtain like a welcome breeze and features the return of the Golem, a rather endearing monster whose fiery qualities are finally turned to advantage when he is harnessed to a series of bread ovens. Finally, a comment on a film I haven't seen: it was pleasant to find Martin Benson stealing practically every Press notice for his performance in *West of Zanzibar*. Mr. Benson certainly has tremendous enthusiasm. Much of his spare time is devoted to acting in amateur films, the latest being High Wycombe F.S.'s *A Game of Robbers*, which gained a four star rating in the Ten Best. He is also the co-author—with Tony Rose—of a book on acting for amateur films.

G.B. BIRTHDAY FESTIVAL

G.B. Film Library are celebrating their 21st birthday with a festival of 16mm. films. By arrangement with the British Film Institute, programmes are to be presented at the National Film Theatre from 14th to 19th June. There will be three sessions daily: educational films in the morning; afternoons, industrial films; evenings, entertainment programmes. Admission to the morning and afternoon programmes will be free, and to the evening sessions at the N.F.T.'s usual prices (2s.—7s. 6d.).

Entertainment programmes will be divided into: English comedians; comedy; the actor—Laurence Olivier; the thriller; a Continental director—Marcel Carne; British contemporary drama. Each programme will feature a full-length film and four extracts. (All films, of course, will be drawn from the G.B. Film Library.) Bookings for the morning and afternoon programmes will be dealt with at Mortimer House, Goodge Street, London, W.1., and the evening bookings will be handled by the National Film Theatre.



How many people make a hobby of their full-time profession? Martin Benson, whose performance in *West of Zanzibar* has been called the best thing in the film by nearly every critic, is a keen actor in amateur films, too.



This picture was taken during a recent demonstration of the Kenton tape recorder used in conjunction with a Truvox deck.

ODD SHOTS

Cut the Cackle in Commentaries!

By GEORGE H. SEWELL, F.R.P.S.

No one can object to a non-stop flow when you're simply demonstrating a recorder; it's an incessant film commentary that becomes unbearable (see "Film Commentaries," page 174).

One Man Show. It is a commonplace in the world of art and in still photography to fill the walls with the works of one man, or, as it is called, to run one man shows. That is something we are going to try in cinematography in my cine club, and we are now in negotiation with the members of a famous film-making family with a view to putting on a complete evening's programme of their work. (Perhaps not quite "one man", but certainly "one family"). We do not intend to show only the best known of their films. The programme will start with some of their earlier, less successful work, and then by showing a succession of films or parts of films in chronological order, we shall be able to trace their progress and to learn something from it.

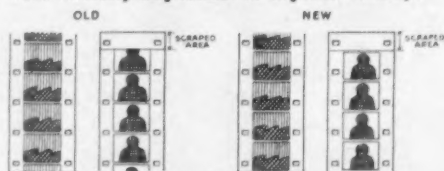
This will not merely be a series of film projections to a passive audience. Plans are well in hand for initiating vigorous discussion after the showing of each item. If the experiment proves a success, we have our eyes on other prominent amateur film-makers.

Pictures and Sound. I seem to have started something with one little group of workers. The other evening we were talking about some of the outstanding examples of the combined use of sound and pictures in films. There is the fascinating little *Tabalot* of Douglas Fisher, in which tablets perform devious gyrations and production processes flash across the screen in strict time with a popular tune; then there's the Ten Best winner, *Floral Fantasy*, in which John Daborn has woven a pattern of flower

shapes, colour and sound; and most important of all is Humphrey Jennings's exquisite production *Listen to Britain*, in which the combination of nostalgic sounds and sights can touch the hardest of hearts. Now, a few days later, I learn that our conversation has borne fruit. One of the members of the group is a keen sound man, who already has something of a reputation for his musical arrangements accompanying film programmes, which have at times included his own recordings. Another member is keen on visual experiments.

These two fellows have got together and have worked out a theme which they have set down on paper in a form which is neither a treatment nor a script. It is a guide to the general shape, length and timing of a film to be made at the end of the year, and its intention is to put over something of their ideas on England. Working separately in their two spheres, but with frequent consultations, the two men will spend the next few months collecting pictorial and sound records that will later be edited together. There is a third person in the group, the editor; he will endeavour to steer all this activity into the right lines. The trio admit that their effort is wildly experimental; but I think it is also wildly exciting.

Three Treatments. In connection with some instructional work I was doing recently I asked three different groups to each prepare a treatment of a subject. I was greatly intrigued by the results, for they represented three entirely different approaches. It was easy to see, on reading one of the treatments, that the author was greatly concerned with verbal ideas in his everyday work (he was, in fact, a school-master). His treatment was a perfect verbal description of the subject, full of concepts which could easily be expressed in words but were virtually impossible to express visually.



Just a dream! See "16mm.: A New Standard" on opposite page.

The second example represented the opposite extreme. Here the subject was described in a series of brilliant visual ideas, even including some suggestions for cross-cutting, camera angles and so on. But the author had been so obsessed with the machinery of cinematography and with the superficially brilliant things he had observed at film society shows, that he had lost sight of the subject itself. When I asked him point blank what he was trying to say, he was quite unable to answer me.



Ace Movies, who this year celebrate their Silver Jubilee, are currently engaged on their twenty-fourth production, Sakura, described as a fantasy of old Japan. It is their first excursion into colour.

The third treatment, although not perfect in form, was almost perfect in approach. The language was simple, the sentences short. Each statement was about something that could be set down visually, though there was no attempt at breaking down these visual ideas into actual scenes and shots. Any practised film maker, reading this document, could see the film come to life in his mind. Yet, of the three treatments, the layman would have thought it was the simplest and easiest to write. In fact it showed evidence of much harder thought and preparation than the other two.

Polaroid Trick. I do not know whether it will come off, but I am going to try to put over a dramatic point with the aid of a polaroid filter. If you point the camera at approximately 30° to the surface of water, put a polaroid filter on the lens and rotate it to the optimum position, you can look through the surface reflection down into the water.

At one point in my story an incriminating object has been dropped into the shallow bed of a stream by a young girl seen in medium shot seated beside the stream. I am going to shoot this scene with the normal surface reflection on the water and come into close-up on the fully

reflecting water surface. Then, by rotating the filter to its optimum position and back again while the camera is running, I want to let my audience into the secret, momentarily disclosing to them the object lying on the bed of the stream. Wish me luck!

16mm. : a New Standard. This is only a dream, hardly likely to be realised. I have been thinking about the comparative methods of joining 35mm. and 16mm. films, and in particular about the horrid way in which part of one

picture encroaches on part of the next one at every join. Suddenly it occurred to me that a simple alteration would clear up the whole difficulty. The sketch shows (left) two ends of normal 16mm. film spliced together and (right) how the shifting of the sprocket holes in relation to the picture frame would alter the situation. What a pity such an apparently simple alteration of the film would require hundreds of thousands of pounds to translate into practical fact!

Photofloods in Action. My heart bled for Mr. Postlethwaite who had to make twenty-five 10in. x 8in. prints to demonstrate lighting to a cine society, particularly as he went to a lot of unnecessary trouble to obtain results which were to some extent misleading. He could have got nearer the truth much more easily. As I mentioned in the March "Odd Shots", I recorded my own lighting demonstration on 35mm. reversal film and projected them on to a screen for discussion.

For a given degree of lighting contrast, you will obtain a much harder result in a paper print than you will in a transparency, and everybody experienced in both still and cine work knows that you must light to higher



A Western with a snow scene? No, earth and sky are a bright yellow, and sets are merely the flimsiest of props in *Red Garters*, the new musical reviewed on page 168. If a few railings and one or two tombstones can represent a graveyard, we should be able to suggest quite elaborate sets without over-burdening the budget!

contrasts for cine. The reason is not far to seek. The light passing through a transparency—as when projecting a film or still picture—is modified once by each of the densities present in the picture. The densities on a print modify not only the incident light which illuminates it, but also the light reflected from the paper base towards the observer. This automatically increases the contrast in marked degree, shortens the scale of the print as compared with the transparency, and loses a lot of the tonal range. Mr. Postlethwaite would have done better to make diapositive prints from his negatives and project them. I used Dia-Direct reversal film because it gives a result comparable with ordinary reversal cine films by methods that are virtually identical.

Film Commentaries. How interesting was Dick Thomsett's article on writing a commentary for a newsreel (April), and how very useful it

could be to the fellow who has a lot of material, not pre-planned, that he wants to link together. The usefulness of the technique recommended is seen in *City of Temples*, the chief I.A.C. winner this year. But how potentially dangerous the information could be if taken wrongly! Many amateurs shoot their stuff with little enough planning as it is; if they now go around thinking: We can cover it with commentary, their visual material will become even more disjointed. The newsreel companies do as much pre-planning as is possible under the often difficult circumstances in which they have to work, leaving the minimum to chance. They are, however, forced to use the "Tennyson's brook" continuously running commentary technique to cover continuity shortcomings on the pictorial side.

The producer who relies on a stream of commentary to tell the story, with the pictures as an addendum, is misusing film and ignoring the very things which give it life. Pictures and commentary should be planned beforehand so that they are complementary, but with most of the work done by the pictures. The commentary must not—repeat *not*—go on non-stop, but should be interpolated to sharpen, clarify or supplement.

Colour Duplicating. A recent issue of *British Kinematography*, official organ of the British Kine Society, contains reports of two very interesting papers by Roland Chase and I. B. M. Lomas, both of Colour Film Services, on duplicating 16mm. colour film, with particular reference to Kodachrome. Mr. Chase dealt with orthodox methods of duplicating and the colour distortion and increase of contrast which are inseparable from such processes. He suggested that the lighting contrast ratio of the original should be somewhat less than four to one, and that the exposure should be half-a-stop less than normal if the original was to be regarded as a master and the duplicates as the end-product. This bears out the experience of many amateurs that slightly under-exposed shots taken in soft light often duplicate surprisingly well. Mr. Chase also described the A and B roll method by means of which fades, dissolves and similar effects can be incorporated in the film during printing.

Mr. Lomas described the principles and application of masking when duplicating Kodachrome, a method which gives a greatly improved duplicate without excessive increase in contrast. However, it is more complex and therefore more expensive than the ordinary, simpler method generally used. It is possible to mask selectively the three colour layers, and there are several printers designed specifically for this purpose.

MAGNETIC CONVERSIONS

G.B. Bell & Howell announce that equipment for converting their 601 and 621 projectors into magnetic/optical machines will be available shortly. Cost of the conversion, which includes complete overhaul of the mechanism, the supply of new record and playback amplifier, new amplifier and sound head casting, and new sound head and blimp carrying case, will be about £150.

They Thought it Out in the Tea Break

By DENYS DAVIS

4th April. When I visited the Leicester and Leicestershire C.S. to give them a talk recently, all the 8mm. enthusiasts had a quick get-together during the tea break. I now know the reason, for a special announcement circulated to all their members has just reached me. They have planned a complete programme on 8mm. work, starting with "time to talk and inspect our equipment." The main programme begins with a discussion on "Why 8mm.?" followed by a series of films on that gauge. During the interval the boot-lace boys will no doubt do their best to recruit fresh enthusiasts. The evening ends with two more films and a talk on "holidays and the cine camera". The announcement promises that everyone will be given a good double run for their money.

It is good to see a club programme well planned out in advance with plenty of jobs for everyone. It is also a good thing to give the users of each type of film a share of the year's programmes for, whatever the camera we use, we cannot fail to learn by hearing how other club members tackled their problems and by seeing their efforts on the screen. Nearly all our difficulties are in the presentation of our material, not in the physical recording of it.

New Type of Society ?

Indeed, it would be nice if we could start a new type of cine society for which members would be eligible for election only after passing their proficiency test. Once the committee was satisfied that they were competent to handle their cine equipment, club meetings would be devoted to programmes of discussion about worthwhile amateur films. In particular, *what* to film and *when* to film might be debated more seriously. Then, with luck, we might see really adult films being made by the amateurs of this country, not in ones and twos as at present, but in sufficient numbers to make up programmes that would attract the general public accustomed to professional film shows.

7th April. I receive a letter from a professional 16mm. cameraman who read my note in the April issue about uneven frame lines. He admits that even his firm suffers from the same problem, especially when they come to deal with library shots or scenes taken by their



Scenes during the production of *Let's Make A Film*, the F.C.S.'s competition postal programme. Top: an insert shot of Richard Hodkin volunteering to take part in the contest is taken, with an Ensign Kinecam. Centre: Denys Davis (right) records part of the commentary. Bottom: the final commentary, complete with effects, music and recorded interviews is re-recorded on to a full track machine.

associated company in Australia. Their solution is to advise the laboratory when a film with varying frame-lines is sent for printing, so that they can decrease the height of the printer gate slightly. This, he assures me, can be adjusted on many modern printers at no extra cost to the customer. The adjustment produces a slightly more oblong picture than normal, but as the cut-off area is black, it is hardly noticeable when projected.

With a fine flourish, the writer signs off with, "Any time you amateurs want a little advice, just let us know..." The letter has hardly had time to settle on my desk before the same firm is on the 'phone to me. This time they want advice! "Could you kindly tell us", asks a plaintive little voice, "how you got that moon effect in *Parcel for John*?"

Preview

11th April. The doorbell rings again and in comes the last guest. I have invited three amateur film makers to come along to my little cinema for a preview. They do not know what lies ahead of them. Richard Hodkin, of the Kingston C.C., and I solemnly hand them a large fibre transit case containing an 800ft. film, two tape recordings and much other material. For us it is the end of three months of preparation, active filming and, I would add, a most enjoyable experience. Because, you see, we have just handed over everything needed for the effective presentation of an entirely different type of film programme to be shown at cine club meetings. In my last Diary, I promised to tell you more about a competition that I have fixed up. It is to encourage clubs to make a short film on a set theme so that each group can assess its work in relation to other teams. You will find the more formal details on page 184.

Our guests soon followed the instructions they found in the fibre box and managed to put over the programme as we had planned that they should. We have put the "lecture" on tape and dressed it up with interviews and effects to maintain interest. In place of lantern slides, we use bursts of film ranging from only a few seconds to one ten-minute sequence. It is, we think, a new idea which seems to work quite well.

Try This Gadget

Apart from one very brief sequence and the titles, we shot the entire 800ft. film in only two Sundays. This involved a great deal of planning, especially as the film shows us making a film. Complicated? Well, yes, it is rather. We had filmed practically everything—the preparations, lighting, make-up, set dressing, continuity, rehearsals—everything but a basic shot of the cameraman actually taking the film itself. A bad lapse on my part that had to be covered up in the editing stage.

18th April. Have been so busy filming recently that I haven't had time for my usual monthly gadget. Still, I managed to suggest one to a tape recording friend that took his fancy. I

suppose we all accidentally erase some precious recording at one time or another, and he did it tonight while making some recordings for me. So I suggested that he might cut the leads away from the erasure switch on his new G.B. recorder and lead them to an ordinary car ignition switch which could be recessed at the back of the casing. The very act of having to pull out a bunch of keys to insert one into the switch would make him think before erasing a recording. This idea, like most good ideas, came to mind around midnight when it was too late to do much about it, but it seems to have possibilities.

Cheap 16mm. Camera Wanted

22nd April. I hear rumours of a new trade promotion scheme about to begin. One of our quality apparatus manufacturers is ready to go with an inexpensive 8mm. camera. Well, we have the Pat for 9.5mm., and now this for 8mm. What about 16mm.? It is about time we had something similar on that gauge. I was discussing this over a glass of sherry with another manufacturer only a few weeks back and he asked me what I considered the ideal modestly priced 16mm. camera.

That was easy! I am sure that the old, obsolete Ensign Kinecam is by far and away the best in its price field, especially so in the case of the model that has a parallax-compensated viewfinder on the side door. Mine cost me £25 second-hand after the war and is still giving first class results. Indeed, only last week I was intercutting between scenes taken with this and a superb Cine-Kodak Special outfit alongside. I would defy anyone to distinguish one from the other. Of course, the Special would take some shots that I could not be sure of getting, but for 95% of the shots we would be on level pegging—and there's quite a difference in the price!

Are They Still Around?

It is a pity that the Kinecam is no longer made, but I did suggest that the jigs and dies must still be in existence somewhere and that some enterprising manufacturer might have the use of these on a licence or royalty basis. After all, one does not lightly throw away valuable machine tool parts and, even if bombed, they were most probably salvaged and in store somewhere. Incidentally, as a loyal Kinecam user, I have noticed how often this particular camera has been used by prizewinning amateur filmers. The less gadgets the better seems to be the rule so far as the camera itself is concerned.

28th April. Have just seen over 1,000ft. of 16mm. interior rushes, with not a duff shot in the lot. I asked the cameraman if he had any trick to remind him to focus, set the aperture, wind his camera, etc. He told me he checks each and every detail whenever he thinks about it, "and that's four or five times for each shot." A pretty good rule, I think, if it gets results as good as that!

Stylish in Looks and Performance

The attractively-styled Geva 8 Carena camera is made in France for Gevaert Ltd. It has a fixed focus $f/1.9$ lens, variable speeds and single picture device, and takes standard 8mm. double-run film. Price £54 6s. 6d.

CONSTRUCTION. The die-cast body measures 7in. long by 4½in. wide by 1½in. thick. Nothing protrudes except at the operating side where there are eleven interruptions to the smooth surface, making the overall width 1½in., increasing to 2in. with viewfinder erected. Weight, 2lb. The lid is a section 3½in. long which is retained by two sliding locks. Finish is in a silver-grey wrinkle enamel with reddish tint, with maroon leather strap encircling the body and terminating in a wrist-loop. Controls are bright-plated, some with leather inserts. The whole is unquestionably calculated to evoke admiration from the lady movie-maker. Men also will probably grunt approval.

DESIGN. Detaching the well light-trapped lid reveals the loading chamber, internally finished black wrinkle enamel. The film path is conventional: no sprocket, but a rubber-covered fixed peg below the gate and a sprung, recessed aluminium roller above it. A leaf spring above the gate guides the film laterally, and the pressure-plate, lens side, is held by a single leaf spring and is detachable for cleaning. The shutter is of the single-blade reciprocating type, which gives the top of the gate, and thus the bottom of the picture, a shade longer exposure.

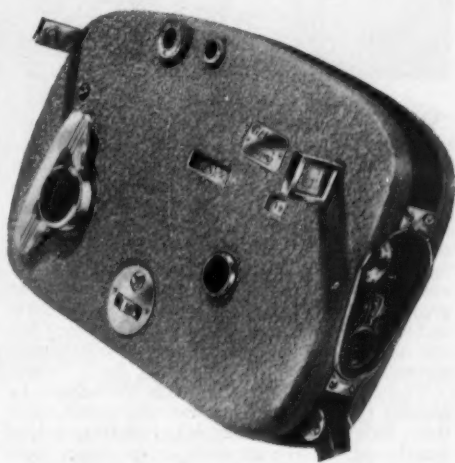
At the front of the camera is an egg-shaped recess; at the top is the lens, a bloomed 12.5mm. $f/1.9$ Berthiot Cinor B, to which a wide-angle or tele attachment can be screwed in, as is general practice with Berthiot lenses. At the bottom of the oval, hinged for swinging into position and pivoted to permit selection, are a yellow $\times 2$ and an orange $\times 4$ filter.

The side of the camera is spread with gadgets. One knob swings the footage indicator, which consists of an arm bearing on the supply spool, clear for loading, and a window gives the footage reading: start, ½, ¾, finish, and trailer-run-off marks clearly indicated by a red indicator.

Another knob selects the lens iris, with click stops to $f/16$, but, unhappily, it is not an iris but a moving plate pierced with holes so that exposure will in some cases only be to an accuracy of half a stop, except that $f/3.5$ is provided between $f/2.8$ and $f/4$. Another window indicates the stop in use. A third knob selects speeds, 8, 16, 24, or 32 frames per second, but not intermediate speeds.

Pressing a fourth knob causes the viewfinder to spring out: an eyepiece with small positive lens and a masked window with negative lens.

In use, the area surrounding the camera field can be discerned, but the actual field is defined in reduced scale. The centre is indicated by a cross engraved in the field of the tele attachment; and since the finder axis is to the side of,



and above, the lens axis, a dot indicates approximate parallax correction for subjects closer than 6 feet.

The folding winding handle is comfortable to use. Operation is by sliding a small knob: backwards for cine, right back for keep-running, forward for single pictures. Above is a locking catch to prevent accidental starting. The eleventh item is the neat nameplate, Geva 8 Carena. (The name "Carena" puzzles us!) In the camera base is a tripod bush, Continental standard, into which is fitted an adaptor for the English ¼in. Whit. standard.

OPERATION. The instruction book is well written and illustrated: the only important omission is the shutter timing and the single-frame exposure time. But there is one bad blunder—on page 16. Compared with $f/8$ at 16 frames per second, the apertures for 24 and 32 frames per second are given as $f/5.6$ and $f/4$, whereas they should be $f/6.3$ and $f/5.6$, respectively. Since it is impossible to set $f/6.3$ with this camera, the type of lens aperture provided is clearly undesirable.

On test, the camera handled well. Two minor disabilities are that the single frame release is not really sweet in operation, and that

(Continued on page 192)



Faced with an
empty screen
because you

Need a Scriptwriter?

Monarch Pictures, an enthusiastic club in Jersey, see to it that their screen isn't often empty. But we hope that they confine the use of their wide screen to films made for projection in wide screen proportions!

"We hope to produce several films this year, but at the moment there is a shortage of suitable scripts." "The script competition prize was not awarded as neither of the entries seemed to merit it." "The script committee once again urged members to submit ideas, but so far the response has not been very good." These thinly disguised heart-cries are repeated in so many club reports that one begins to visualise great armies of members with cameras, lights and meters constantly at the ready, waiting for the miraculous manifestation of worthwhile scripts.

The fact that so many clubs *do* believe in waiting until they find something worth their time, trouble and money is, of course, a very healthy sign. Even the most ardent cameramen have begun to admit—often as the result of bitter experience—that superlative photography cannot help a poor plot or unsuitable subject. (There are still very few who realise that a really good script will survive all but the very worst camerawork.) Good photography and lighting are gradually being recognised for what they are—aids and adornments to an end, not ends in themselves.

Keen, But Nervous

But it's strange that amateur units should be so frustrated in their desire to get good material, for there are just as many keen would-be scriptwriters as there are would-be cameramen. They're mainly non-technical types who don't join cine clubs because they're a little nervous of getting mixed up with gadgeteers who seem to talk another language. Of course, there are probably some who aren't even aware of the existence of a local group, but in these cases the club's publicity is at fault.

All you need to do, then, is to contact one of these elusive scribblers. But where do they lurk? Libraries? Writers' circles? Well, you might be lucky and find one or two who understand the difference between writing in words and writing in pictures, but it's far more likely

you'll be handed wads of rejected—and quite unadaptable—short stories.

The most obvious place to find your scriptwriter is the place where films are most appreciated locally. Find the address of your nearest appreciation group—usually termed film society—and pay them a visit. You'll probably unearth far more than a team of eager scriptwriters. Film societies are the second homes of would-be directors, editors, actors and art directors—which makes it all the more absurd that co-operation between members of cine clubs and appreciation groups is so limited.

Mutual Benefits

Both groups have too many wrong ideas about each other: the cine man believes the society enthusiast is a non-creative highbrow critic only happy when watching *Battleship Potemkin* for the twenty-third time; the society member imagines the average cine man is a photographer-cum-engineer with a kind of electronic brain. Yet each has actually a great deal to offer the other.

The society member, for instance, usually has a good knowledge of film technique; he can often recognise a film as being the work of a particular director without seeing the credit titles. He understands how and why a director achieves his best effects, and he appreciates creative cutting. He is among the first to applaud good camerawork—but his knowledge of the technical problems of film-making is often surprisingly scanty. Moreover, the chances are that he has seen very few amateur films and understands little or nothing of the difficulties involved in their production. Yet he is probably willing to learn by experience. His knowledge of technique and his understanding of treatment will prove invaluable to you, while your demonstrations of the practice, as opposed to the theory, of film making, will engross him. What could be fairer?

But don't forget that the film society has a lot to teach the cine club. How can you hope to

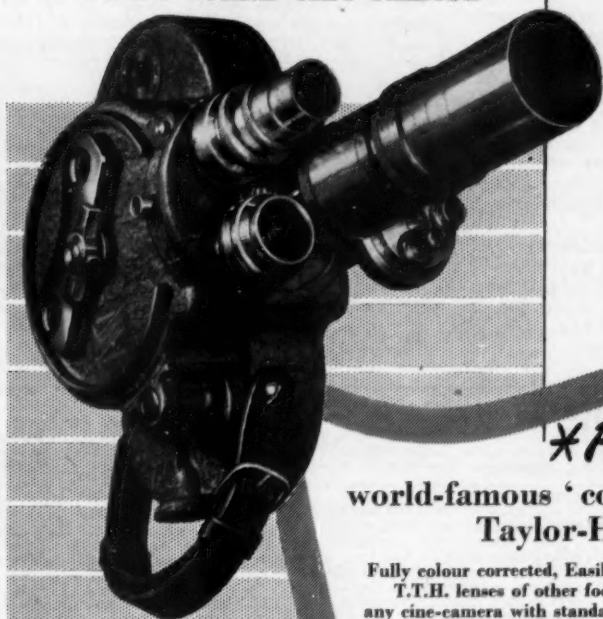
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make a good film if you can't even recognise one? Gasp indignantly if you like, but it's an unfortunate fact that a film's real virtues often go quite unappreciated. "But I've got eyes and ears," splutters the layman. True, but who would claim to be a good judge of music simply because he possessed ears? Modern art and sculpture is ridiculed mainly by people whose only qualification is a pair of eyes.

Real film appreciation demands effort and study; but no amateur worth his salt will question whether the results are worth the trouble. Apart from the object lessons which will enable him to improve his own films out of all recognition, his pleasure in his normal cinema-going will increase enormously.

Nation-wide Opportunities

A few cine clubs originated as off-shoots from film societies; a few others try to form their own appreciation group. The danger of the latter course is that club members, with one eye on the funds, tend to borrow every free publicity film available and screen it regardless of its merit.

Of course, the really keen movie-maker, who wants to go in for films in a big way, should by now be a member of the British Film Institute, whose services extend over the whole country. Every London amateur ought to be a frequent

visitor to the invaluable National Film Theatre; every provincial amateur should be able to find a film society within reach. (The Federation of Film Societies, 164 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.C.2. can supply the address of your nearest group.)

Co-operation Needed

These, then, are some of the avenues which are open to you for improving your own ability by learning from the work of the greatest—and at the same time to contact people who will be delighted to try their hand at scriptwriting. In the "Forthcoming Shows" section of our club reports we propose to publish details of future film society programmes, in the hope that this will encourage co-operation between both groups.

We suggest that you bring this opportunity of valuable publicity to the notice of society members. You might also point out that every issue of *A.C.W.* contains much information that will add to their knowledge of film theory and teach them something of film practice. The features on scriptwriting, directing and editing, and the reviews of the most notable professional releases should prove a popular introduction to the activities of the amateur cine world—and, who knows, perhaps you'll soon have more scripts than you can deal with!

News from the Societies

Reports received by the 10th of each month will appear in the following issue.
Club stills are always welcome. (Address on page 135.)

Spotlight

High Wycombe F.S. have an enviable reputation among British cine clubs. Yet their members number only thirty—not nearly as impressive a figure as that boasted by many a less productive club. What is the secret of this club's consistently high level of achievement? We found several strong indications of the answer when we called on them one evening recently. The programme was billed as a discussion on the state of the Society's finances, and suggestions were called for which might improve the state of the club's kitty. In nine clubs out of ten a film would have to be shown to coat such a programme pill with sugar—or an attendance of about 20% would result. At Wycombe we counted 25 members, and the meeting was devoted solely to discussion.

Practically everyone had some argument or view to express. Feelings were freely unbottled; there was no atmosphere of repressed criticism. The Chairman himself was subjected to one or two fiery blasts—such as the charge, "All you've done is to give a name to something which we still haven't got!" But members obviously had respect for each other's viewpoint. Difficulties such as local apathy and dissensions within the Society were faced squarely. Here, we felt, was a group of people determined to settle

in a sensible and civilised manner the problems which face every club.

The Society was originally an appreciation group. The production unit, formed as an off-shoot, attracted so many members from the original organisation that it eventually swallowed the appreciation group whole. Since then the story is well known. Titles like *Full Circle* and *Paper Boat* are milestones in amateur film history. The Society's origin is reflected in its present circumstances: scripts and ideas are plentiful and only funds are limited. The latter state is familiar; the former is rare indeed—but it does bear out our advice on page 178. (Secretary, Mr. Robert du Powton, Old Mill House, Gilletts Lane, High Wycombe.)

The Crest Film Group of Bedford may be an unfamiliar name at present, but with the members of the disbanded Bedford F.S. Production Unit forming a nucleus, it seems unlikely that this situation will last long. Already the Group are planning to show the 1953 Ten Best; and a news-reel magazine, a documentary, a story film, and a series on the activities of local organisations are all being considered for future production. After an inaugural meeting this statement was issued: "By filming local events and topics we hope to build up a unique record of contemporary local history. The film is more than a mass entertainment. It should be made to serve the community—and that is one

of the fundamental aims of the new Group."

This policy reflects the success of the old Unit's presentation of their film, *River Highway*, which is a plea for the restoration of the derelict locks on the Great Ouse. Its reception locally was overwhelming; the warmth with which the film was praised by public and Press alike astonished members. Snags in production—which was spread over three years—and in presentation were numerous. All the usual troubles were experienced, plus a few unique ones thrown in by a malignant Fate for good measure. Nevertheless, the appreciation bestowed upon this 25-minute S.O.F. production has encouraged members to form the new club. Obviously Bedford is prepared to support the Group—and the Group means to show itself worthy of that support. (Acting Secretary, Mr. S. H. Draper, 27b Pemberton Avenue, Bedford.)

On the Way

Ray A.C.G. have recently acquired new club rooms. Their first meeting in their new premises was devoted to the script of a proposed 16mm. production, *On The Mat*. Other activities, apart from the decorating of the new rooms, have included the screening of a programme for a local youth club and the last in the winter series of programmes at a local Red Cross residential home for elderly people. (Hon. Sec., Mr. R. A. Martin, 25 St. George's Avenue, Timperley, Altrincham, Cheshire.)

Triad F.U. are preparing *The Trap* for 16mm. production and *Spring*

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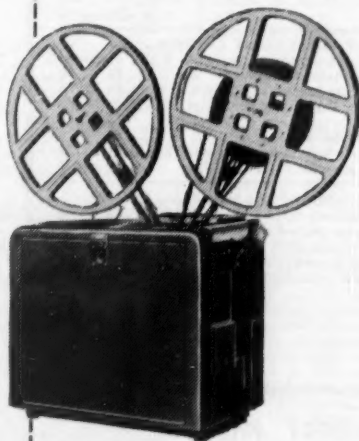
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Symphony, which is to be shot in 8mm. colour. An old-time film show was presented recently. Two 500 watt Spectos were used and the feature was *The Son of the Sheik*, starring Rudolph Valentino. The house was completely sold out. Exchange visits with other clubs in the district have provided several enjoyable evenings. (Hon. Sec., Miss J. Booth, 4 Watcombe Circus, Sherwood, Nottingham.)

Sovereign Pictures are working on the script of a film to be shot on 9.5mm. and 16mm., with a Dekko and a Bolex respectively. A two-hour tour of the Odeon, Leicester Square, was of absorbing interest to a group of members who recently visited the cinema. Meanwhile the club's first production, a 9.5mm. test film, is practically complete. Membership is steadily rising, but new members, with or without equipment, are still welcome and are invited to contact the Hon. Sec., Miss M. Soule, 68 Farnedale Avenue, Palmers Green, N.13.

Newera A.F.U. have decided upon their first production and hope to start work on it within a few weeks. A lecture on the basic principles of cinematography was given by a member of the Unit, and it is hoped to have a talk by a dealer on new equipment. A recent screening of a 9.5mm. film of the Coronation gave several members their first chance of seeing 9.5mm. colour. (Hon. Sec., Mr. R. W. G. Bennett, Mayfield, Lostock, Bolton.)

New Forest C.C. members are preparing to start shooting a new story film, *One Man's Meat*, in mid-summer. The camera section recently organised a meeting at which members had the opportunity of examining each other's cameras and testing accuracy and length of run. Details were tabulated and some interesting comparisons made. (Hon. Sec., Mr. J. K. Friend, Scroby Farm, Osmeysley.)

East Ham 9.5mm. C.C., who now number three professional projectionists among their members, are planning three productions during the coming season—a 100ft. comedy, a comedy mystery called *A Mug's Game*, and a colour film on plant life in a local park. A club room is being sought by members, who boast a variety of 9.5mm. equipment. Anyone interested in joining the club is invited to contact the Hon. Sec., Mr. D. Ford, 165 Altmere Avenue, East Ham, E.6.

Cheltenham A.C.S.'s next production is to be "a 10-minute comedy about a cine group with several technical effects." During the local

Film Society's last season the club presented three programmes, including the 1952 Ten Best, a club production, *Regency Cheltenham*, and a member's film, *Cheltenham Spa*. New members are welcome. (Hon. Sec., Miss M. Luck, 47 Barbridge Road, Cheltenham.)

Carnoo C.C. are to remake a member's film as a club production. Recent activities have included a visit to Sale C.S., publicity for a public show, and tests for an animated trailer. The advantages of using models rather than cartoons for animation is almost negligible according to members' findings. Re-recording facilities have been added to a tape-deck, and the chance of comparing different equipment is being given to several new members. (Hon. Sec., Mr. T. A. Siddons, 34 Mary Street, Harpurhey, Manchester 9.)

Venturer F.S. have decided to make an additional comedy to the one already in production. A recent film show proved very successful, and *The White Hell of Pitz Palu* has been booked for future presentation. (Hon. Sec., Mr. R. Lambert, 24 Clark Ave., Hyde Park, Doncaster.)

In Production

Southall C.C. report good progress on both their current productions. The A.G.M. showed the Club's affairs to be in a very healthy state. Members have recently been hosts to Pinner F.S. and the guests of Ickenham F.S. The Mayor and Mayoress were shown *The History of Walton* by the Club; they missed it during the Ten Best presentation when they had to greet Miss Diana Dors at a local cinema during the show. The Club's new Secretary is Mr. M. Swan, 11 Manston Avenue, Norwood Green, Southall, Middx.

Perth A.C.S. are gaining experience by filming the activities of the local section of the Scottish Ski Club. The finished film will run to about 200ft. of 9.5mm. monochrome. A scripted production is planned for the summer. (Secretary, Mr. R. F. Paterson, Greenhill, Brompton Terrace, Perth.)

Canterbury A.C.S.F.U. are engaged on their current production, *Make Your Own Movies*. Members have been very active lately in the equipment sphere. Two 3-speed gram units and a pick-up arm have been bought in a local sale, and a variety of gadgets have been fitted to the club's Scophony-Baird tape

1953 Ten Best Presentations

Here are details of the first showings of the 1953 Ten Best following the London premiere last week:

BRISTOL 26th May, 7.30 p.m. Bristol Phoenix C.C., Folk House, Tickets, 2s. from A. E. Lord, 29 Warden Road, Bristol 3.

BEDFORD 27th May, 8 p.m. Crest Film Group, Town Hall, Tickets, 2s., from S. H. Draper, 27b Pemberley Avenue, Bedford.

UXBRIDGE 29th May, 3.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m. Uxbridge Film Unit, St. Andrews Hall, Tickets, 2s. 6d., from R. A. Piggott, 7 Frays Ways, Uxbridge, Middlesex.

BIRMINGHAM 1st June, 7.30 p.m. Birmingham Commercial Films Ltd., Midland Institute, Tickets, 2s. 6d., from B.C.F. Ltd., Paradise Street, Birmingham 1, or Corporation Street, Birmingham 2.

A diary of subsequent shows will appear in later issues. Will club secretaries please note that the films are solidly booked for the six months, Sept. 1954—Feb. 1955, but there are vacant dates before and after this period. Early application for these is strongly advised.

1952 TEN BEST

TRURO 11th June, 7.30 p.m. Truro Post Office Sports and Social Club, City Hall Annex, Tickets, 2s., from W. Solomon, 7 Trelawney Road, Truro, Cornwall.

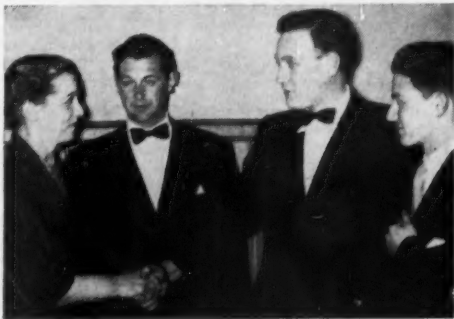
recorder for special effects. A major addition to the club's equipment is another Bolex H16. Meanwhile, paint and distemper are flowing freely at the Grange Studios, and wiring for an indicator light system is going ahead. An electric cooker is among the Studio's latest amenities. (Chairman, Mr. A. L. Field, 35 Bennells Avenue, Tankerton, Nr. Whistable, Kent.)

Meridian F.U.—formerly Greenwich & District C.C.—have started shooting their first 16mm. production, a comedy entitled *You Have Been Warned*. Several shots were taken in a local public house during open hours, much to the interest of the regulars. An actress from Raven C.C. has been loaned to the Unit for the film's first sequence. Through the Unit meet at Mottingham, S.E.9, at present, it is hoped that a more central meeting place will soon be found. New members are welcome and should contact the Hon. Sec., Mrs. D. Beavan, 49 Devonshire Drive, Greenwich, S.E.10.

West London F.U. are nearing completion of their 16mm. film with a macabre theme. Another 16mm. production, described as the main film of the year, is about to be started; its provisional title, *You Don't Smell the Flowers*, is the subject of some controversy. Members recently saw Focus F.U.'s *Judgment In White*. New members (any gauge) are welcome. (Hon. Sec., Mr. A. F. Shave, 77a Adelaide Grove, Shepherds Bush, W.12.)

Ardleigh House Community Association C.G. report that their 16mm. *Husband's Choice* and their sound film,

The Chairman of Bedford F.S. Production Unit, whose members have now formed the Crest Film Group (see Spotlight—page 180), welcomes the Mayoress of Bedford to the recent premiere of the Unit's first production, *River Highway*. This 900ft. 16mm., s.o.f. documentary was given enthusiastic praise by the public and local Press.





Let's Make a Film

The design of the Watts challenge trophy should encourage entrants to the F.C.S.'s new film contest to pay particular attention to editing. The trophy and ten guineas worth of cine goods will be awarded for the best entry based on a theme set by the Federation, and given in Postal Programme No. 12, "Let's Make A Film", which illustrates on picture and tape the production of a club film. Entries must be shot on 16mm. monochrome reversal film at 16 f.p.s., must start and finish with fades, must contain no titles, and must not exceed 100ft. in their final edited versions. There is no entry fee, but clubs have to hire the programme to discover the theme—which, we are told, can be treated as slapstick, domestic comedy, drama or documentary. All entries will be circulated later free of charge. Details from the Federation of Cinematograph Societies (Postal Programme Service), 44 Corstorphine Bank Drive, Edinburgh 12.

Samaritan, are both nearing completion. Members recently acted as hosts to Walthamstow C.G., who demonstrated their Bell & Howell magnetic stripe projector.

Doncaster C.G.'s 8mm. documentary—as yet untitled—is progressing well, and further projects in 9.5mm. and 16mm. are being considered. Local enthusiasts are cordially invited to join the Guild. (Hon. Sec., Mr. W. H. Heyes, 18 Sandall Rise, Wheatley Hills, Doncaster.)

Kingsway F.U. have nearly finished shooting *Inner Circle*, and editing is already under way. A number of locations in North and Central London were used. A stock shot film, tentatively entitled *The Broken Venus*, is also being edited. Material shot in the past three years with four different cameras is being used, but frame line difficulties are not as serious as was originally feared. Enquiries to Mr. J. M. Anderson, 14 Chase Hill, Enfield, Middx.

Work Completed

Grosvenor Film Productions report the completion of *The Way to Adventure*, a 16mm. documentary on weather research in the Cairngorms. The club assisted the boys of Kings College, Taunton, in its production, and it will soon be available for all colleges in Britain. The club's winter season has proved a great success. Over 8,000 people visited the club stand during a five day hobbies exhibition, and 14 new members were enrolled as a direct result. The 1952 Ten Best presentation and public shows of the club's comedy and thriller played to capacity houses. Plans are now going ahead for *Child's Play*, which will have a 4-year-old boy as the leading player. Club boffins have recently been responsible for some extraordinary screens of all shapes and sizes, and their experiments are continuing.

Notes and News

Centurion F.U., a new group with a membership of 25 teenagers, recently had a visit from a representative of PatheScope who gave a talk on film appreciation. Films from six other clubs were shown during a recent

amateur film night, *The Millstream* being voted the most popular. The club's sound expert has almost completed a tape recorder. New members are welcome, and should contact the Hon. Sec., Miss S. Reynolds, 126 Eastcote Lane, South Harrow.

Hitchin C.S. report a large and appreciative audience for the 1952 Ten Best—the first time any Ten Best programme has been shown in the District. *Fishers All*, *Sidetracked*, *Handle for Scandal* and *History of Walton* were voted the most popular in that order, though there was very little between them. (Hon. Sec., Miss D. L. Daniel, 116 Cambridge Road, Hitchin, Herts.)

Leeds Camera C.C. held their most successful annual get-together recently. Nearly a hundred people attended, including guests from Bradford, Halifax, Huddersfield, Otley and Dewsbury clubs. A note in the April A.C.W. from Mr. Ellison of Leeds asking for supporters to start a 9.5mm. club seems to have surprised members, who comment that they "are only too happy to welcome cine enthusiasts in any gauge". (Hon. Sec., Mr. L. Moore, 2 Lawnswood Gardens, Leeds 6.)

Blackpool A.C.C.'s new premises (173 Church Street) are right in the centre of the town, and are more spacious than their old headquarters into the bargain. When decorating is completed, the Press, dealers and local notables are to be invited to a celebration party. A portable proscenium is also being constructed. Cine enthusiasts visiting Blackpool are invited to contact the Club for any

A.C.W. SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Secretary would be pleased to arrange the annual subscription or renew an existing one, for any member who wishes to avail himself of this service. There is no doubt that CINE WORLD is the best and most interesting cine magazine available today and any member will benefit from an occasional wander through its pages. — From the magazine of the Christchurch Movie Club, New Zealand.

Thank you! U.K. secretaries are reminded that it is easy to arrange subscriptions through their usual suppliers if the magazine is not required to be sent by post.

information or assistance they may need. Meetings are held every Monday evening at the above address and the Hon. Sec. is Mr. G. T. Purdy, 157 Lytham Road, Blackpool.

Wimbleton C.C.'s annual competition attracted eight entries, three on 16mm., one on 9.5mm., and four on 8mm. *It's In The Bag*, Mr. R. R. S. White's 8mm. holiday film, was awarded the Brunel Cup for the best film submitted—the first time the Cup has gone to anything other than a 16mm. production. *Holiday Boy*, the 1953 Ten Best winner, was awarded the Watkins Cup for the best 16mm. entry. Ealing Film Studios judged the contest. The club's next production is being discussed; a record number of scripts were submitted at an initial meeting, and three were selected as being suitable. (Secretary, Miss D. M. Sheppard, 35 Denmark Avenue, Wimbleton, S.W.19.)

The Amateur Cine and Photographic Club (Brighton) report that their new Secretary is Mr. N. Willcock, c/o The A.C. & P.C., 16 Little Preston Street, Brighton 1.

Edinburgh C.S. spent an interesting day at the Scottish Film Festival in Glasgow, travelling in a bus hired for the occasion. Plans for a stand at a forthcoming hobbies exhibition include an idea for shooting the exhibits and crowds, processing the film within a few hours and screening the results in a miniature cinema to be erected at the exhibition. (Hon. Sec., Mr. W. S. Dobson, 20 Barnshot Road, Edinburgh 13.)

Nottingham A.C.S.'s new Secretary is Mr. R. E. Fell, 83 Charlbury Road, Nottingham.

Kingston & District C.C. recently saw the 8mm. version of *The Perils of Pictoregging* for the first time. (Their 16mm. version was a four star winner in the Ten Best.) Priority was given to the larger gauge team during production, and the 8mm. camerawoman was congratulated on the success of her work. As soon as the after-effects of presenting the Ten Best premiere have worn off, the Club hope to concentrate on their film of a life of Mybridge, the script of which is now being scrutinised for possible improvements. A talk on s.o.f. presentation was recently given by a representative of PatheScope, and a lecture and demonstration on indoor lighting were given by the Club's President and Chairman. (Hon. Sec., Miss M. E. Turner, 8 Meadowside, Walton-on-Thames.)

Liverpool Amateur Photographic Association C.G. sent four delegates to a conference of N.W. societies affiliated to the F.C.S. A discussion on the club's policy preceded the conference, and was attended by other Merseyside clubs. *The Spy* was shown at a recent film appreciation evening, and detailed programme notes were prepared. The Group have booked the F.C.S.'s Postal Programme No. 12 and hope to enter for the competition being run in conjunction with it. (Hon. Sec., Miss W. D. Lusk, 34 Linnet Lane, Liverpool 17.)

Sale C.S. held a double celebration recently on the occasion of moving back into their enlarged headquarters. The Treasurer, Mr. J. J. Butterworth, has been awarded a Trophy in the Ten Best for the third year in succession. Warrington, Manchester, Eccles and Cameo societies sent members and

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A.C.W. Test Report, October 1953

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films along to the celebration, resulting in a memorable evening. New members are invited to contact the Secretary, Mr. H. G. Percival, 97 Ashton Lane, Sale, Manchester.

A.C.W. 9.5mm. Circle No. 21 has vacancies for several new members. Any 9.5mm. enthusiasts interested in joining should write to Mr. W. Gammage, 60 Craven Street, Northampton.

New Clubs

It is hoped to organise a cine section of **York Camera Club**. All three gauges will be catered for, and local enthusiasts are invited to write to the Secretary, Mr. J. de Frates, Leaside, 9 Pasture Lane, Stockton Lane, York.

Cleveland A.F.U. is a new club in the Billingham district. Anyone interested in joining should contact the Secretary, Mr. J. F. M'Ghee, 20 Roseberry Flat, The Causeway, Billingham, Co. Durham.

Mr. F. H. J. Marz, 39 Walsingham Road, Clapton, London, E.5 invites enthusiasts with equipment to contact him with a view to forming a new production unit.

Small Heath & District Photographic Society have formed a cine section within their organisation, and filming is about to start on their first production, *The Man She Left Behind*. Write to the Hon. Sec., Mr. B. R. Jones, 36 Fernhurst Road, Alum Rock, Birmingham 8.

Victoria A.C.C. is a new club in Malta, G.C. With one film to their credit, members have decided on a target of a film every three months. All work is done on 9.5mm. The Club is interested in exchanging views and ideas with other societies. (Hon. Sec., Farrugia Jos., c/o Schembri Stores, 16 St. Georges Square, Victoria, Gozo, Malta, G.C.)

Planet Hire Fees

Our apologies to Planet F.S. In the December A.C.W. we inadvertently omitted the address from which their films could be hired. The club's film librarian is Mr. A. Shepherd, 41 Woodberry Avenue, Winchmore Hill, N.21. Hiring rates for 16mm. silent films are 4s. 6d. per reel, and not 4s. 6d. per film, as our announcement has apparently lead some readers to believe.

TEACHERS' FILM COURSE

Three groups of five teachers were initiated by George Sewell into the mysteries of preparing a treatment and scripting an instructional film during a week-end course in Durham last month. Each group had chosen its own subject and prepared a tentative treatment several weeks before, so that they were able to get down to the practical work at once. Shooting on each of the films was carried out during the ensuing week, and in due course the films will be edited and titled and submitted for criticism. Pupils as well as school teachers should eventually benefit from the week-end, for the cine bug has a most contagious bite.

Seems to have been an exhilarating though tiring experience, for George, who had travelled up through the night on Friday and back through the night on Sunday, found himself going northwards again, the sole passenger in a train which had called at Kings Cross and was then on its way to the sidings at Horney.

British, American
and South African

Contests and Festivals

This production still is from The Will To Live, the 1,000ft. 16mm., s.o.f. production which was awarded the Victor Saville Trophy for the outstanding film of the Scottish Amateur Film Festival.



"Spare the scissors and spoil the film", A.C.W.'s favourite maxim, was the principal theme of adjudicator Leslie Norman's comments on the Scottish Amateur Film Festival entries. Mr. Norman, producer of *Mandy*, *The Cruel Sea* and *West of Zanzibar*, awarded the adjudicator's prize to John Daborn for his Ten Best winner, *Floral Fantasy*, thus stressing his appreciation of knife-edge cutting. One of the two new awards presented at this year's Festival, the Richard Massingham Cup for a film in the lighthearted manner, also went to a Ten Best winner—*Two's Company*, the Grasshopper Group's pixilated comedy. The other new award, the Michael Balcon Trophy for the best amateur recorded sound, was won by Fidelity F.U.'s *The Will To Live*, which received the Victor Saville Trophy for the outstanding film of the Festival.

This 1,000ft. s.o.f. 16mm. production was shot in colour, though a monochrome copy was entered for the contest. Fidelity F.U., whose films are made for use in the service of the Church, have had two previous successes in the Scottish Amateur Film Festival, *The Fisherman and the Djinn* and *Little Greatheart*. *The Will To Live* was written and produced by the Rev. Merricks Arnott and directed, photographed and edited by Frank H. Marshall (Chairman of the Scottish Association of Amateur Cinematographers), whose pre-war Ten Best films of his (then) young children are happily remembered. A Bolex H16 camera was used, and specially composed music, dialogue and sound effects were recorded on tape and later re-recorded on to film. The film's theme is the conflict between body, mind and soul, expressed in a problem confronting a young medical research worker.

The six class awards at the Festival were: the Hitchcock Cup (fiction)—*Without A Shadow Of A Doubt* by A. G. Morris; the Humphrey Jennings Memorial Trophy (abstract)—*Masquerade* by Enrico Coccozza; the British Film Institute Cup (documentary)—*West of the Lizard* by Ronald H. English (comments on this film, which was awarded two stars in the Ten Best competition, appear on page 141); the Glasgow Cup (teaching)—*My Wife's Patchwork* by C. P. Abbott; the Andrew Buchanan Cup (family)—*A Dream Come True* by T. H. Thoms; the Bryce Walker Cup (novice)—*To Heal A Mind* by Hamptune F.U.

Special Awards

A number of special awards were presented: the Marshall Quach award for the best entry by a member of the S.A.A.C. went to *Cameo* by Enrico Coccozza; the Oliver Bell Memorial Trophy for a film of moral significance—*Judgment In White* by Focus F.U.; the Lizars Cup for a film on Scotland—*Tartan Triumph* by J. B. McDonald; the Isabel Elder Cup for an educational film—*When Bee Meets Bee* by C. P. Abbott; the Doherty Trophy for an education film—*Making Chocolates* by S.E.F.A. Production Group.

Additional cash prizes were awarded for the following films: *A Letter To My Son* by Victor Atlas; *Crabbit Granny* by Enrico Coccozza; *Leave It To Sam* by Newcastle and District A.C.A.; *A Visit To Wells* by the Rev. John McKee; *Approach To Api* by J. B. Tyson; *Tweed* by S.E.F.A. Edinburgh Branch; *Gloria Regina* by R. H. English; *Low Tide* by Peter Bowen; *Animals On Parade* by T. Leslie Charnock; *Early Morning Walk* by F. M. Widdup; *The Tree And The Leaf* by A. G. Morris.

Stereo Festival

The magazine *American Cinematographer* modestly admits that its recent 16mm. 3-D Film Festival "was not the biggest of film festivals". Eight films were shown, but as the Festival was non-competitive, no place awards were made. Six of the eight were filmed with Bolex 3-D attachments, one with a Nord attachment, and one with a special twin-camera unit. J. S. Frieze, director of Peak Films, was represented by *Zoo Snapshots*, the only English film among those selected for presentation. Judging by the report of the Festival in the latest *American Cinematographer*, it stood up to comparison with the American entries admirably.

The other films screened were *Indian Summer*, holiday record, *Thorndyke*, *The Cactus Kid*, slapstick comedy, *Spring Has Come To Helsinki*, a semi-documentary, *Four-D*, a sponsored film on the importance of dairy products to health, *You And Stone Container*, another sponsored film, *This Is Progress*, yet another sponsored film, this time on car production, and *This Is Your Line*, subject not stated. *You And Stone Container* and *This Is Progress* were the only professional films.

The quality of these films is vigorously praised. Indeed, it is stated that "16mm. single-film 3-D pictures have none of the uncomfortable eye-irritating distortion inherent in so many 35mm. 3-D film presentations in theatres." Who knows, perhaps this is the beginning of a new "gauge war" on an even bigger and better scale? But "perhaps the greatest shortcoming of the Bolex, Elgeet and Nord stereo systems" is the fact "that the picture has a vertical instead of a rectangular picture . . . For many in the Festival audience, the narrow picture was an objectionable feature."

Record Breaker

One of the lesser-known competitions is Johannesburg A.C.C.'s annual contest for the Five Best. Arland Ussher, who has won a prize every year since 1947, has broken another record by winning the "Film of the Year" Cup for the third time with *City Of Eternal Dreams*, a short film on Venice. Incidentally, we cannot help feeling a little disturbed at a slightly ominous programme note: "the peculiar motion of a gondola makes it quite impossible to hold a camera steady on any object, but this has the advantage of letting the audience also enjoy the sensation." Mr. Ussher's *Manzatunya*—the Barotse name for the Victoria Falls—also gained a place in the Five Best. The programme, praising the classical music background of this travelogue, comments, "To a great extent the charm lies in the way the picture illustrates the music." Opening, perhaps, with a shot of a cart and horse?

Another winner in the contest is M. J. Kallin's fiction film, *The Trophy*. B. T. Smith, whose *The Silver Fox* won a Ten Best award last year, has a place in the Five Best for the fifth successive year with *Laughing Waters*, which features the fountains at La Villa d'Este in Tivoli. Frank G. Abernethy was awarded the Bob Pollak Trophy (for a film on South African animal, insect or bird life) for *Silken Threads*, which also obtained a place in the Big Five.

Pathescope Competition

Pathescope's 1953 Open Award competition was won by *Which Came First?*, a film on poultry farming by G. Fry of Bramdean, Hants. Second place was taken by *Secret of the Warren*, B. & P. Film Unit's drama, and F. T. Lack's *Memories of Dawlish*, "a holiday film with a difference", came third. Certificates of merit went to Mountfield Cine Group's *Dunorlan 1865*, J. Burnham's *The Garden Isle*, and J. Currie's *Citizens Capture*. Though there was an increase in the number of entries, the average standard is reported as being disappointing compared with 1952's films. The first twelve films, however, are stated to be "definite improvement" over last year's entries.

Focus Film Unit are to present the Scottish Amateur Film Festival prizewinners at the Institut Français cinema, South Kensington, on 10th June, at 7.45 p.m. Tickets, 2s. each, are available from A. Kaulins, 11 Burgess Hill, Hampstead, London, N.W.2.

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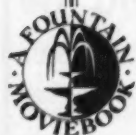
This book will, without question, repay its modest cost in saved film, besides doing much to prevent those disappointments which only too frequently accompany first ventures into cinematography. It is specifically aimed at the man starting in the hobby mainly with the idea of making family films, but it would be surprising if, after reading it, the novice was not fired to undertake work of wider application, for the text breathes inspiration, the enchantments that lie beyond mere cine-snapshotting and the methods of simply realizing them being fittingly introduced.

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Cine Bookshelf

HOW TO WRITE FILM STORIES (By Richard Harrison, Focal Press, 7s. 6d.).

It is difficult to say how far this book will succeed in stimulating amateurs to improve their stories. One's main trouble is always in finding the original idea—the elusive inspiration for a plot that really clicks. But the author devotes most of his space to development. Original ideas, he implies, are so few and far between that the safest plan is to adapt fiction, poems, and real life incidents.

Obviously there is vast scope in these fields, but the book's title encourages us to expect more information on original plot construction. Yet apart from a few remarks about day-dreams, it is hardly mentioned. Too much space is devoted to detailed scripts—including one very lengthy and remarkably unhelpful excerpt from a professional film—and these are surely out of place in a book purporting to deal with basic story writing. Oswell Blakeston's *How To Script* in the same series covered all this ground—and much more thoroughly.

The chapter headings—What Is A Story?, Structure, Characterisation, Choosing A Story, Original Themes, Adapting From Fiction, Adapting From Life, Three Stories, and Conventions of Story Telling—give the impression of thorough coverage, but the material is not as adequate as they suggest. Moreover, although story films are usually the province of the more serious amateur, Mr. Harrison writes in a simplified, semi-bantering style which suggests a deliberate writing down to the mental level he imagines his readers to have. This impression is strengthened by the quite pointless illustrations, which add nothing to the text and are apparently there merely to break up the print.

This book will probably suggest ways of finding plots which many amateurs have not considered—no mean achievement. It will also be invaluable to those anxious to embark on story film production for the first time. But the amateur who has produced a few photo-plays, who realises that the original plot wasn't up to much, and who wants to know where first-class ideas come from, will find it a disappointment. Incidentally, the glossary at the end of the book can only have been intended for the reader who will never learn to write film stories. Anyone else will surely not need definitions of plot and atmosphere. And it's interesting to learn that fiction is "the stuff of life moulded to conform with your story."

STORY FILM WORK WANTED

A.C.W. reader, Jim Jeffrey, new on his way to this country from New South Wales, would like to join a London club which makes advanced story films. He is a competent cameraman (mostly outdoor experience), scriptwriter, director and editor, and has a Bolex H16 with accessories. He expects to be at 45 Nevinn Square, Earls Court, London, S.W.5, from 1st June.

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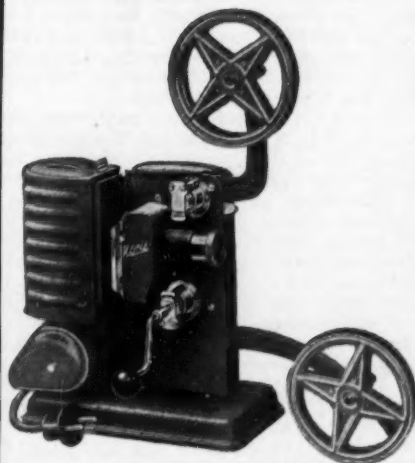
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STYLISH IN LOOKS AND PERFORMANCE

(Continued from page 177)

with the method of holding the camera advised by the makers, it is hard to shoot downwards without dislocation of the right wrist; indeed, the girl in the instruction book illustration is filming at such an angle that she would miss anyone standing on level ground in front of her.

The camera readily slips into a jacket pocket—and does so without likelihood of damage or alterations to settings, though dust might reach the lens and the filters. These filters are rather flimsy, and we confess to some doubt as to both their provision and their mounting: they might well have been an optional extra.

RESULTS. We shot our tests on Gevaert super reversal, BS 26°; and using Weston 16 and giving the next larger rather than the next smaller stop when in doubt, we got back a reel of ideal 8mm. exposures, bright pictures of sparkling quality. We suspect, therefore, that the shutter time is about 1/32 sec. per frame. The lens gave crisp, pin-sharp quality at all apertures, and the depth-of-focus table in the instructions can be accepted with confidence.

Film steadiness was good at all speeds for a sprocketless camera, and was maintained throughout a very long animation shot which we

MAGNETIC MAGIC

We have just completed our tests—they included the use of stock specially edge-stripped for us—of the G.B. Bell and Howell 650 magnetic projector. Full report next month.

filmed at one frame per second for over 200 frames. There were traces of "breathing" at the start of shots made towards the end of the first run. The camera ran about 30 seconds at normal speed for one winding, and there was only a slight loss of speed before the automatic stopping. The picture seen in the viewfinder is a shade small, but this gives the psychological advantage that the picture on the screen is clearer than that seen in the finder.

The camera shape undoubtedly makes for steadiness, once a good hold has been acquired. The filters were rather fiddling to adjust, but, on the film used, their factors were accurate and they undoubtedly provide a means of adding quality to black-and-white films. The frame-line is unconventional, coming not at the sprocket-hole centres but at their extremes. This has the advantage that, when splicing, the mixing of adjacent frames at the splice is reduced to a minimum. The gate aperture is such that there is a slight black, unexposed, frame line between adjacent frames—also an advantage, in our view.

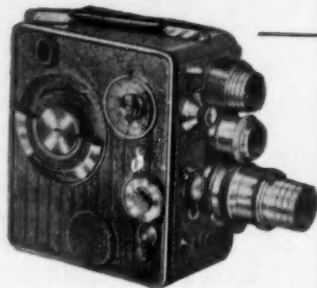
The lateral spring certainly maintained admirable freedom from side-sway, and in a superimposed title relative movement between title and picture was only minor, so the effect

(Continued on page 194)

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can be confidently undertaken. (The method is described on page 150 of this issue.) At the smaller apertures, a species of fade-out can be done by moving the lens aperture control slowly to the mid-point between two apertures, while shooting.

The spring motor ran sweetly and with good power reserve, first frames being undiscernible during projection. On the whole, the camera behaved very creditably indeed. Anyone should be pleased with its performance, while the user who particularly takes to its style will be highly delighted.

ONE NIGHT STAND

(Continued from page 149)

Vapour floods, output erratic, one Mercury Vapour suspension light on a gas barrel boom, a 500 watt spot and a batten of four No. 2 Photofloods. The plan of campaign was for Group A to take all the necessary shots on the first set while Group B prepared the next set, setting up the camera, marking the various light positions, and running through the shots with the actors available. This leapfrog system was employed throughout the shooting, and the only anticipated cause for delay was the lights, which had to be moved from set to set.

The responsibility for these was divided between the electrician and a group of unskilled porters. The electrician laid on a supply; the porters positioned lights at the orders of the lighting director, and helped the electrician connect up to the distribution box. Eventually only one of the 2Kw floods was used, as insufficient power points were available, but used in conjunction with the three Mercury Vapour lamps, the batten and the spot it meant an average exposure of $f/3.5$ for Kodak Super XX stock, filming at 16 f.p.s. The lowest exposure was $f/2.8$ and the highest was $f/5.0$ using a Weston speed of 64.

At 5.35 the fun began, and to everyone's amazement it continued until 8.45 when the final shots were taken. The only people who seemed to be affected by the sustained effort required were the lights crew, who claimed that it would have been easier climbing Everest than hauling "all that junk up all them stairs".

Anyway, it was done, and now we await the results. Three things have been achieved—three things that may be of little importance to anyone but ourselves. We have proved that minutely detailed planning pays dividends in shooting time; we have proved that it is the ideal way of employing a large group of people on one film; and we have hit on the idea of making a one day summer film using nothing but exteriors (and a heap of food). We have yet to see if it economises on the use of stock, as the chances of retakes are slim. If two or three of the key shots are dud then the rest is waste.

Was it a good or bad idea? No one in the group will express an opinion until the results are on view; but at least it *was* an idea. Is it any use to your club?

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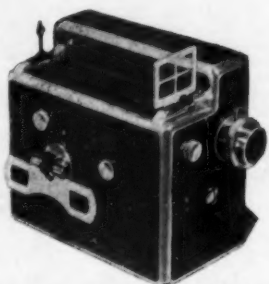
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A CAR AND A CAMERA

(Continued from page 161)

hand-in-hand . . . But I expended about seventy feet at Mont St. Michel.

Our next big shooting match was at Douarnenez, the sardine-fishers' town of Brittany. How can I possibly describe the place? The fishing-boats are painted pale blue-green, and the nets which hang in great curves from their masts are sky blue. The fishermen wear waterproof clothing in various shades from pink to orange, and sometimes white peaked caps. They look like pirates. The boats have Breton-Celtic names like Korunuen-ar-Mor, and the sun shines and the sea sparkles.

I took shots of a fishing-boat slowly leaving the quay-side and growing smaller in the distance; a mid-shot of a very precise young Frenchman bumping along the quayside on a tiny motor scooter, with a girl clinging on behind him; a shot of a small row-boat crammed with men coming ashore from a ship, the boat so crowded that its gunwale was within an inch of the water, and the men sitting talking and spitting . . . They saw my camera in action and put on a wonderful act of nonchalantly leaping ashore. My best shot was one of a very small boy, no older than six, sculling with grave dignity a tiny boat on the glittering strips of water between the anchored ships. I ran off no less than 120ft. in Douarnenez in the space of three-quarters of an hour.

We followed the same plan at Concarneau a few days later, and again at Benodet, in each case, taking what I may call a complete impression of the place and its people. At Benodet I got a delicious little picture, shot in a downwards direction from a bluff, of a respectable Breton lady in full black skirt and velvet bodice, and wearing on her head a lace coif—a cylinder about nine inches tall and two inches in diameter. She is seated in a boat in the middle of a little bay, calmly knitting.

At the approach to every French town there is a large clean white concrete plaque with the name of the town printed very large in clear red letters. This provides an easy and satisfactory way of getting the place identified on the film. Of course, we actually shot such posts on our way out, whenever we had done any filming in the town.

Anyone who has been keeping note of my remarks on footage expenditure will have deduced that by now we have very little of our original 500ft. left. Our final filming was done in a town called Pontivy where I got a shot of my wife talking French (with both hands) and receiving a clear and unmistakable smile and nod of understanding from the person addressed.

I used up the last 50ft. or so on the conclusion to the film—car drives on to ship at Calais; ship leaves quayside; ship sails out of harbour mouth (I filmed another ship which left ahead of ours); car swung ashore at Dover; car drives off; closing shot of car (obtained by driving car up to camera), finishing with C.U. of Scottish pennant on bonnet.

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FRENCH VILLAGE IN SURREY

(Continued from page 167)

we actually shown the firing party, all wearing the right uniform.

The officer takes M. Morrisot to one side and whispers fiercely: "Tell me the password. Your friend will never know". For a moment M. Morrisot's eyes flicker and then become fixed in a stony stare of refusal. The Commandant walks over to M. Sauvage and makes the same offer. Again a refusal. The Commandant strides out of the frame, watched with painful intentness by the two friends. Then their glances meet and one senses that each is trying to encourage the other. Sauvage's look wavers and he stares sadly out of frame. Cut to close shot of the bag of fish lying on the cobbles.

Back to a long shot of the officer. He barks out an order. A line of rifles thrusts up into the frame. Close shot of officer, sword raised. He dashes the sword down as he shouts: "Fire!" Long shot of tree tops, birds wheeling round in panic. Cut to officer: smoke drifts across his face. The smoke came from a slow-burning powder heated in a tin lid over a primus stove, while everyone flapped madly with newspapers to persuade it to drift in the required direction. A volley of well aimed bricks induced the birds to rise in a cloud.

Returning from the utterly pointless execution—a waste of two lives, a waste of shot—the Commandant notices the abandoned catch. At least that shall not be wasted. He gives the order for it to be fried at once. Fade out on the wet patch of cobble stones where the fish have lain.

(A comment on *Two Friends* appears on page 142)



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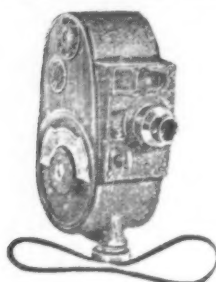
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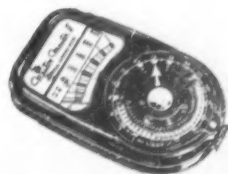
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